



**EEx Collaboratory**

BUSINESS PLAN - 2019

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to the Brookings Institute, increasingly complex global challenges require schools to rethink education (Winthrop, 2017). Mastery of basic academic skills in math, reading and writing are no longer sufficient to prepare students for the world they are inheriting. Young people increasingly need to be creative problem solvers and critical thinkers. They need to be collaborators who are flexible, adaptable, and who can empathize with others. Most importantly, they need school experiences that help them build these abilities in a culture that is both challenging and supportive.

As schools around the country look for models to learn from, The Exploris School is well-positioned to lead the way. From its inception in 1997, the school has been committed to relevant, inquiry-based learning and global education. The school has grown to become a model of innovative education where teaching and learning extend far beyond the walls of the classroom, and where students grow skills to be creative problem solvers through investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, and taking action as caring citizens.

We are launching a new chapter in the growth of The Exploris School, the EDEX Collaboratory. The EDEX Collaboratory addresses the critical need of transforming teaching and learning to prepare students for a rapidly changing world. The EDEX Collaboratory will empower teachers to change the way students learn by engaging students in solving global problems. Realizing that teaching is often isolating, professional learning through the EDEX Collaboratory will emphasize learning alongside a cohort of educators who collaborate, reflect, and grow together. The EDEX Collaboratory will provide ongoing professional learning and coaching creating a network of innovative-minded educators ready to transform their classrooms and schools.

**collaboratory** (noun) 1. a center without walls 2. a network of diverse innovators generating solutions

Education + Exploris + Collaboratory  
**ED**ucation + **Ex**ploris + **Coll**aboratory  
**EDEX Collaboratory**

## A. MISSION

The EDEX Collaboratory is designed to empower innovative educators to stay on the forefront of transformative teaching practices through building an active educator network, leading professional development and coaching, open sharing, and creating cohorts of ongoing peer support. Educators in the EDEX Collaboratory network will empower children to engage in solving problems to improve today's global society.

We believe that...

- Each student deserves an empowering, experiential, and meaningful education.
- Every educator is an agent of change; a designer capable of innovation and teacher-leadership.
- Change in the classroom happens when professional learning is inspiring, collaborative, sustained, intensive, and job-embedded.
- Active learning communities of growth-oriented educational thinkers create positive and lasting change.
- High quality resources should be open source, freely available and generously shared, to benefit all teachers, schools, and students.
- Teachers are professionals who deserve high-quality learning experiences.

## B. BENEFITS

The EDEX Collaboratory will have the following main benefits:

- Extend best practices beyond Exploris, empowering more learners to improve our world
- Collaborate with innovative partners and educators
- Demonstrate best practices
- Develop teacher-leaders
- Keep educators at the forefront of education
- Promote engagement and change in education



## C. COMPETITIVE POSITIONING

A key differentiator of the EDEX Collaboratory, among a competitive market, is that the EDEX Collaboratory will focus on supporting educators beyond the onsite experience. This will be achieved through virtual coaching and a private online group. Studies consistently show that ongoing support in professional development (PD) is the most effective way for educators to learn and grow. Most competitors in the professional development space follow a workshop or conference format with little to no ongoing support. Competitors are discussed in more detail under External Environment and Appendix A.

The EDEX Collaboratory will....

- Build an educator network focused on collaboration and support opportunities
- Have a strong focus on sustained professional learning including ongoing networking and support, as opposed to stand alone, short-term workshops
- Connect participants to the work of current practitioners
- Be moderate in cost for accessibility to more educators
- Provide high-quality content with engaging, hands-on teaching practices
- Provide a great overall experience where educators feel valued
- Support educators with their chosen problem of practice
- Support educators of educationally disadvantaged students



## D. GOALS

Within three years the EDEX Collaboratory will provide a life-changing, quality professional learning experiences where teachers are valued, energized, and inspired. This will be accomplished and measured by the following:

- Provide ongoing professional learning and support for over 1500 educators
- Foster a collaborative and active educator community for over 500 educators
- Create and share open-source resources used by over 2,000 educators
- Impact learning opportunities for 30,000 students
- Develop and support over 12 practicing teachers to lead professional learning and coaching

- Foster relationships with partners including external organizations and innovators in education including leading and planning professional learning experiences with at least 6 partner organizations, creating an active educational advisory group, raising over \$500,000, and building an endowment fund
- Launch the ED Ex Collaboratory with a full-time director and hire an additional one and a half full-time employees by the third year. The director will have a deep understanding of global education and The Exploris School as well as business acumen, the ability to create new, quality programs, and collaborate with Exploris teachers
- Communicate the benefits of the EDEX Collaboratory with community stakeholders through the publication of an annual summary and report
- Complete ongoing and thorough evaluation of programming
- Maintain open communication and a symbiotic relationship between the EDEX Collaboratory and The Exploris School

## E. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Unlike schools offering professional development, the EDEX Collaboratory will provide transformative experiential learning for educators. This approach will require the need for external funding to achieve the goals and vision outlined in the EDEX business plan. During the second and third years, funding needs will increase due to the hiring of extra staff to grow outreach and develop new initiatives. If the EDEX Collaboratory is able to secure funding exceeding projected operating expenses, the funds will be used to further reduce costs for educators participating in programming and hire additional staff to increase outreach and offerings. Detailed financial projections and assumptions can be found in Appendix B and linked [HERE](#).

For the 2019-2020 year the the EDEX Collaboratory will hire one full-time position and will offer stipend-based contracts to a small number of interested guest presenters and social media ambassadors.

### Financial Overview

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$ 21,320	\$ 46,150	\$ 110,155
<b>Total Costs &amp; Expenses</b>	\$ 141,218	\$ 220,727	\$ 284,687
<b>Total Fundraising</b>	\$ 120,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 175,000
<b>Operating Profit</b>	\$ 102	\$ 424	\$ 468
	0%	0%	0%

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

### **A. INTRO**

There are more schooling options today than ever available to parents: public, private, charter, homeschool, STEM-based, Waldorf, Montessori, religious-oriented, language focused, arts integration to name a few. There are also a myriad of professional development options from online resources to workshops and district-level consulting. The EDEX Collaboratory will address how to most effectively support innovative educators in various settings to help their students thrive in today's world.

### **B. INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Culture/Values**

Exploris is a school with a strong collaborative culture that lives its core values daily. Teachers that are a good fit for the project-based learning model are drawn to Exploris due to the autonomy and creativity Exploris allows in teaching that empowers them to have ownership over their job and impact their students and the community. The innovative nature of Exploris teachers and the drive to make meaningful change in the world is ingrained in the culture of the school. Also embedded in the culture is having the courage to experiment and take on risks and challenges.

There have been a lot of changes going on at Exploris recently including: plans for a new building, switching from multi-grade to single grade and the move to co-teaching in all grades K-8. Even with the myriad of change, Exploris teachers and staff are accustomed to and thrive in a fast-paced environment that allows them to adapt and grow.

#### **Credibility and Notoriety**

Exploris has received many accolades between the school's accomplishments, teacher awards and student achievements. In 2014, The Exploris School earned the designation of the first model STEM school in the state of North Carolina by the NC State Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Award. On staff the school has 2 Burroughs Wellcome Fund Career Awards for Science and Mathematics Teachers, 2 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, 3 Kenan Fellows, and 5 Educators of Excellence, to name a few. The school's commitment to project-based learning and getting students outside the classroom to solve global problems can be seen in projects such as Drum Majors for Justice, The Food Heros, Trash Talking 101, and numerous Walnut Creek Wetland Park projects.

## **Charter Responsibilities**

By increasing collaboration with educators in local school districts and beyond, Exploris can openly share its instructional strategies in a meaningful, pragmatic and supportive way that will complement the teachings of other schools, regardless of school structure.

As a public NC charter school, The Exploris School is intended to encourage progressive teaching methods and share best practices with other schools. Exploris's commitment to sharing its findings and philosophy is also part of its vision: "Empowering learners to improve our world." The school's commitment to sharing is also demonstrated through free tours and school visits. Annually hundreds of educators and administrators from across the state, country, and internationally come to The Exploris School to observe its teaching practices.



## **C. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

A report titled "*Bridging the Gap: Paving the Pathway from Current Practice to Exemplary Professional Learning*" collected data about professional development offerings from over 200 school districts and it emphasizes that only "20% of professional learning opportunities offered today meet with the new federal criteria for quality" (Combs, 2016). New federal guidelines define quality professional learning as meeting six criteria: sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused.

The EDEX Collaboratory will differentiate itself from the highly competitive marketplace by offering cohort programs with teacher support and networking that meet federal guidelines. Studies suggest that "the traditional workshop form of professional development struggles to produce meaningful change in teacher practice because workshops are often too general in content or do not offer active learning opportunities" (Quintero, 2019).



# Bridging the Gap

## BY THE NUMBERS



**Sustained** \sə-'stænd\ adjective;  
taking place over an extended period;  
longer than one day or a one-time workshop.

KEY METRIC:  
Activity enrollments consisting of more than three meetings

finding:  
**13%**

**Intensive** \in-'ten(t)-siv\ adjective;  
focused on a discrete concept,  
practice or program.



KEY METRIC:  
Average length of PD activities (in hours)  
finding: **4.5 hours**



**Job-embedded** \ˈjəb, im-'be-dəd\ adjective;  
a part of the on-going, regular work of instruction and related to teaching and learning taking place in real time in the teaching and learning environment.

KEY METRIC:  
Activities offered within the school system



**Collaborative** \kə-'lɑ-bə-,rätiv\ adjective;  
involving multiple educators, educators and coaches, or set of participants grappling with the same concept or practice and in which participants work together to achieve shared understanding.

KEY METRIC:  
Enrollment in an activity with a collaborative format

finding: **9%**



**Data-driven** \ˈdeɪ.tə,drɪv-'n\ adjective;  
based upon and responsive to real time information about the needs of participants and their students.

KEY METRIC:  
Activities offered aligned to a data-driven format

finding:  
**8%**



**Classroom-focused:** \ˈklas,room, 'fookəst\ adjective;  
related to the practices taking place during the teaching process and relevant to instructional process.

KEY METRIC:  
Activities aligned with classroom-focused InTASC standards.



When considering professional development programs and organizations that are trying to create change in the culture and method of education, there are four main groups to consider:

- 1) For-profit and nonprofit organizations impacting education on a larger/district level scale
- 2) Online resources
- 3) Schools leading professional development/tours
- 4) Districts and state agencies

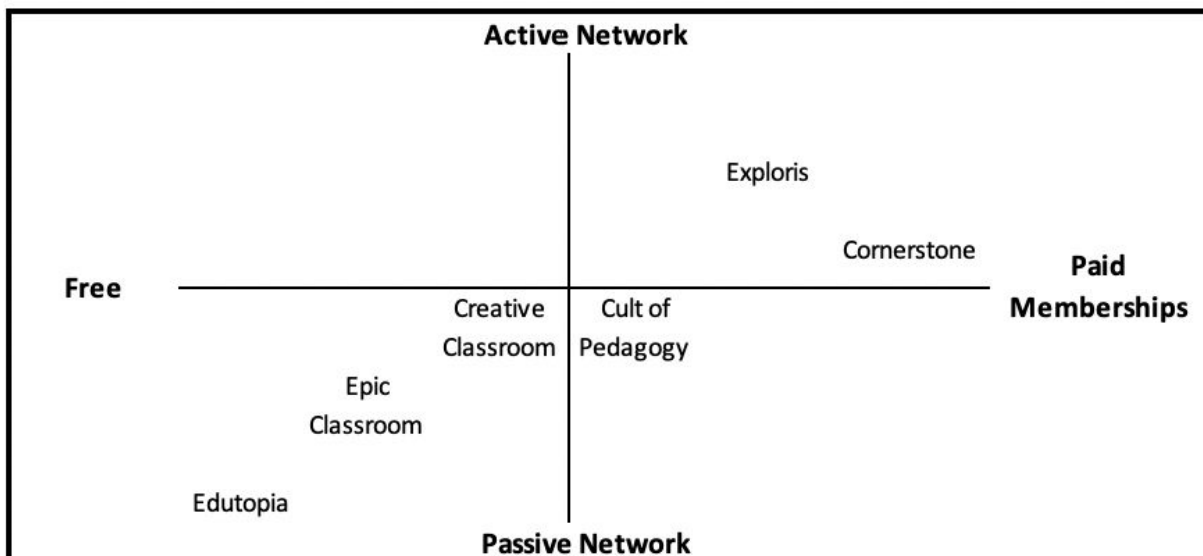
### 1) For-profit and nonprofit organizations

The independent for profit and nonprofit institutes tend to focus on change at a higher level and their target market includes whole schools or districts. Although consultants sometimes work with individual teachers, they are hired by the school or district to prioritize goals and develop school wide and/or district wide strategies. Also, these services are not targeted towards individual teachers and are typically more expensive than our target customer can afford.

### 2) Online resources

There are numerous online resources teachers turn to for professional development or classroom/curriculum resources. While some of these are high quality and have benefits such as being free or low cost and learning from the convenience of your home, some have major drawbacks such as inconsistent quality, lack of depth, no accountability of implementation or peer support. The gap analysis chart below analyzes five influential educator bloggers/podcasters with large followings and high quality content. The chart also shows where Exploris’s EDEx Collaboratory will fall within the current landscape. A more detailed analysis of each blogger/podcaster is included in Appendix A.

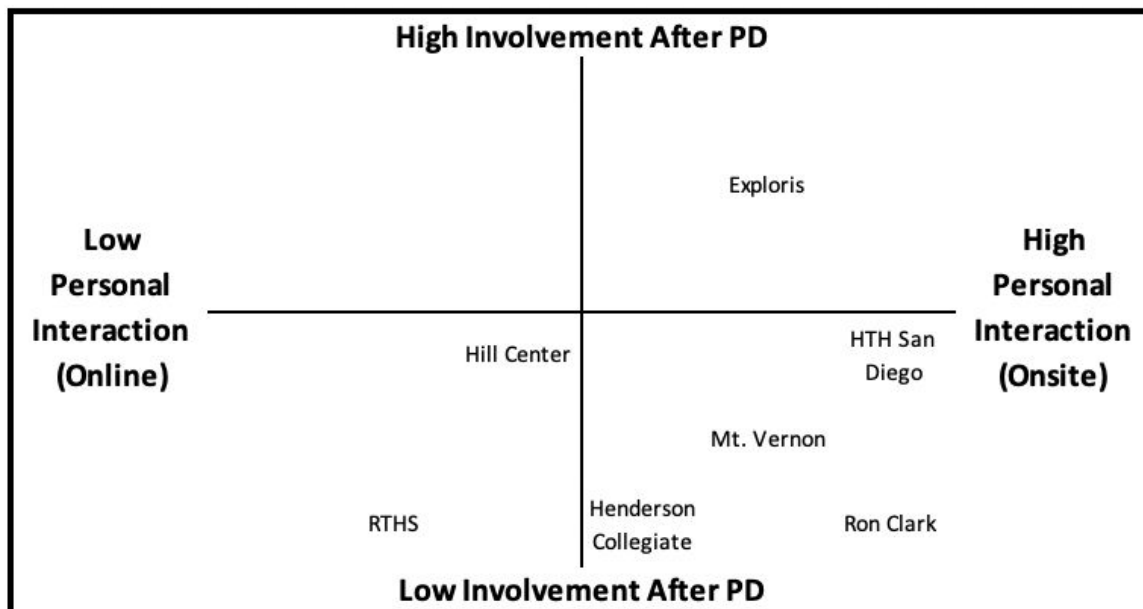
#### Gap Analysis



### 3) Schools leading professional development/tours

While there are many schools across the country offering professional development programs for K-12 teachers, they vary in degrees of cost, content quality, and overall experience provided. The gap analysis chart below analyzes six professional learning programs/organizations partnered with a school. The chart also shows where Exploris's EDEX Collaboratory will fall within the current landscape. The schools and their corresponding programs were selected because they represent various geographic locations, school types (private and charter) and methods of teaching (online courses, in-person workshops, customized programs, etc.) All receive outside funding in the forms of grants and/or corporate sponsors. A more detailed analysis of each school is included in Appendix A.

#### Gap Analysis



### 4) Districts and State Agencies

School districts and a state's department of public instruction will organize, lead, and offer professional development for their systems' teachers. Typically large districts have an entire department of coaches and consultants who are full-time employees and lead professional development at no cost to the school or teacher. In larger districts professional development is often mandated/required to address goals within a strategic plan. When in-house coaches and consultants do not have enough bandwidth or expertise, districts and states may outsource professional development to other for profit and nonprofit institutions.

## D. SWOT ANALYSIS

This section provides an overview of the Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats associated with the EDEX Collaboratory and The Exploris School.

## **Strengths**

- Twenty year track record of implementing innovative educational practices
- History of strong student outcomes
- Recognition for quality educational offerings as the NC's first Model STEM School and a national Green Ribbon School
- Commitment to making the local community stronger through student engagement and service-learning
- Agile and reflective school environment
- Culture that encourages prototyping new ideas
- High caliber teachers
- Exploris teachers are regarded as leaders and innovators
- Faculty interest and support in expanding professional development offerings

## **Weaknesses**

- Short time-frame to execute and secure funding may provide cash flow difficulties in Yr 1
- Lack of diversity in student body may make it more difficult to win grants (Equity and Diversity Committee's plan and weighted lottery will help but may take a few years)
- Labor and commitment involved in starting the EDEX Collaboratory during an already busy time at Exploris
- Lack of designated on-site space for an elevated experience until we move into the new building
- Current goals for the work are large, job may be too big for one person
- Potential challenges when finding the right balance between increasing classroom observations, access to teachers, and access to ambassadors without impacting instruction

## **Opportunities**

- Popularity of project-based learning, experiential learning and other methodologies used by Exploris are on the rise
- Addressing relevant topics in education as opposed to specializing in just one area (such as Mount Vernon Institute For Innovation focusing on Design Thinking) keeps programming from "fads" or having to re-invent itself
- Messaging that the curriculum will be actionable in various educational settings
- Developing Study Visits that are informative and useful
- Developing meaningful partnerships with innovative educational thinkers in the state and nation
- Shifting possible negative perceptions of charter schools by making a positive impact on the community.
- Supporting innovative teachers who are looking to challenge the status quo
- Developing and sustaining cohorts of educators who support one another to strengthen teaching practices

- Organizing a small group of teachers to serve as teacher-leaders to work with the Director and help drive direction of the EDEX Collaboratory

### Threats

- Need for and reliance on substantial outside funding from outside sources (grants, corporate sponsors, donations)
- Financially sustainable professional learning experiences are expensive for schools and teachers
- Tight profit margins, especially without supplemental funding
- School funding for professional development is low
- Competition both in North Carolina and across the country
- Teachers from traditional public schools may have the perception that Exploris can do things as a charter school that they can't implement at their school
- Potential negative and/or political perception of charter schools among stakeholders (donors, grantors, educators, etc.)

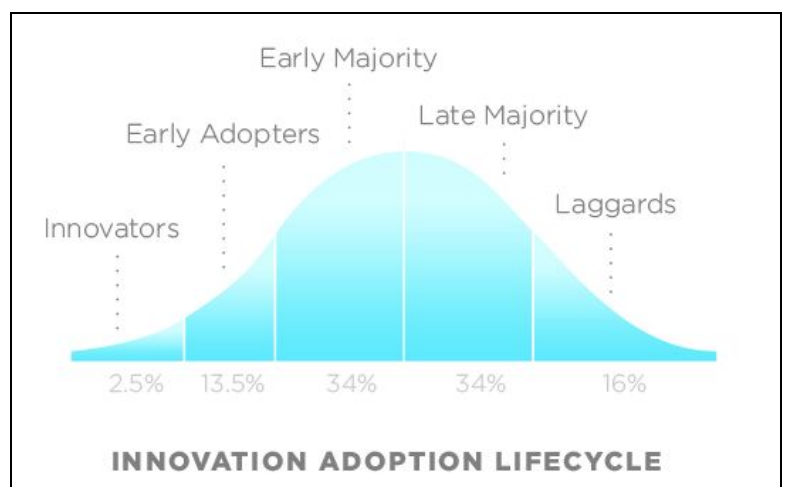
## 3. MARKETING

### A. TARGET MARKET

In 2019-2020, we will reach educators in North Carolina, including an emphasis building relationships with educators working directly with educationally disadvantaged students. The key target market for the EDEX Collaboratory includes innovative educators, Restart schools, and school leaders.

#### Customer Persona: Innovators

Our ideal target customers are K-12 educators and the leaders who support them. They are innovative educators who are early adopters and the early majority on the Innovation Adoption Life Cycle. They want to gain support from a network of like-minded teachers and hone their craft to provide the best learning experiences for their students. There will be teachers who are satisfied with the status quo and are not compelled to grow and innovate – these are not our customers. Although they may attend a workshop or conference they will not be motivated to engage in the ongoing professional networking and learning.



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technology\\_adoption\\_life\\_cycle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technology_adoption_life_cycle)

Research shows that increased teacher autonomy leads to a greater sense of empowerment and professionalism and teachers are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they don't have the freedom to make their own lesson plans (Tampio, 2019). The EDEX Collaboratory will support innovative teachers in becoming more autonomous in the classroom and the satisfaction of being a professional who has control over their career.

<b>Characteristics of our Customer</b>	<b>Challenges of our Customer</b>
Innovative collaborators - thought leaders who think outside the box, question the status quo, and desire to grow alongside others	Frustrated - when innovators cannot make change they can become frustrated
Growth motivated - they naturally feel the need to grow and challenge themselves	Exhausted and have limited time (long hours of teaching)
Desire to feel valued - they want to better the world	Possible low morale from feeling undervalued
Status in knowledge - early adopters who want to share with their friends and colleagues	Limited budget - their pay does not reflect their effort, level of schooling, or importance of position
Believes all students can learn and grow and are highly motivated to help students succeed	Has many students with high needs but lacks resources, support, and time for each student

### **Restart Schools**

Another target market for the EDEX Collaboratory to consider is Restart Schools, low-performing schools that are given new opportunities to turn themselves around - some given "charter-like" flexibilities to make change. Cost will be a consideration with Restart Schools as many are in low socioeconomic neighborhoods and they are not given additional funding for professional development - rather, they are given more flexibility in how they use the funding they already have. Grants and other sources to subsidize funding should be considered. However, many Restart Schools are also Title I schools. Title I schools do receive additional funding that can be used for professional development.

Over 100 NC public schools are participating in the state's Restart program. The Innovation Project (TIP) is focusing one of their main initiatives on supporting restart schools by helping them redesign learning environments, providing coaching and facilitating opportunities for participants to network. A possible opportunity for the EDEX Collaboratory is partnering with TIP on their visits to innovative North Carolina district and charter schools. The purpose of these visits is to support schools in TIP districts that are in the redesign process by providing examples of schools using charter and charter-like flexibilities to reshape their approaches to teaching and learning.

## **School Leaders**

It will be important to remember that the EDEX Collaboratory appeal to school leaders as well. Systemic change will happen only when school decision makers and teachers are united. Also, school leaders such as curriculum coaches, science specialists, etc. typically attend professional development and share with staff upon return. Additionally, school leaders approve school-level professional development spending and have the discretion to support professional development opportunities for staff.

## **B. MARKET ANALYSIS**

According to 2017-2018 employment data released by the NC Department of Public Instruction there are over 83,000 teachers within a 3 hour drive of Exploris's campuses in downtown Raleigh. Additionally, there are an estimated 2,000 plus public charter school teachers. If 13.5% of these 85,000 educators are early adopters, our in-state target market includes approximately 11,500 teachers. Even if one percent of this number participates in paid professional development through EDEX Collaboratory there would be over one hundred educators participating.

In general, professional development funding typically comes from the following three sources:

- The school pays
- The teacher pays out of pocket
- Scholarships, donations, and/or grant funding

Often funding comes from a combination of the above. For example, a teacher may pay out of pocket for all travel expenses, receive a scholarship or grant to attend, and the school may pay sub fees. It is important to know that teachers will and often do pay out of pocket for professional development. Teachers are responsible for attending professional learning opportunities as they work on accruing Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for license renewal.

In 2008, state funding for professional development dropped from \$12.8 million dollars to \$0 and has remained a \$0 dollar line item ever since. Although, Governor Cooper's most recent budget proposal restores professional development funds by including \$5.3 million for more professional development opportunities, it is not a guarantee that his budget spending plan will pass.

To fill the funding gap left by removal of state money, schools have shifted funds for professional development from other budget areas. Also, opportunities for professional development grants have increased including the new Governor's Educator Discovery Award Application which will award up to twelve \$1,000 professional development scholarships per year. Other grants can be found through state and local organizations, a school's PTO/PTA organization, and by posting professional development opportunities on the popular philanthropic education site Donors Choose.

It will be helpful for the EDEX Collaboratory to stay abreast of possible funding sources and to connect educators to potential funds for professional development.

### C. PROGRAM OFFERINGS

#### Education Service Offerings: 2019-2020

The following offerings are suggested for 2019-2020 school year with a full-time director position. The EDEX Collaboratory will start by offering programs in high demand, generate revenue, and play to our strengths. These core offerings will be further developed in future years.

Program	Description	Cost
<b>School Tours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 tours per year - 4 per campus</li> <li>2 hours per tour</li> <li>30 people per tour</li> <li>Private tours can be arranged for a fee</li> </ul>	\$0  \$250 per private tour
<b>School Visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 visits days per year - 1 on each campus</li> <li>5 - 6 hours (9:15 - 2:45)</li> <li>30 ppl/visit (2 leaders if &gt;20 ppl)</li> <li>Overview of school and seeing core Exploris teaching practices in action</li> </ul>	\$150 per person, or \$125 (if registering with a group of 4 or more)
<b>Study Visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 offered per year - campus TBD</li> <li>2-3 consecutive days per Study Visit</li> <li>Focused on a deeper dive into a specific topic (possible examples: PBL, Standards-based grading/Assessment/Portfolio, Change Management for Schools, Citizen Science, STEM, Global Education, Service-learning, etc)</li> <li>Networking opportunities</li> <li>20 ppl/visit (2 leaders if &gt;15 ppl)</li> </ul> <p>After the face-to-face experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual follow-up and/or coaching (see Ongoing Support below)</li> <li>Invitation to online community</li> <li>Invitation to network meet-up</li> </ul>	Approx \$775 per person
<b>Guest Expert PD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple potential offerings (Cohort, multi-day, one-day, etc.)</li> <li>Topics based on faculty interests and specialty areas</li> <li>Guest presenter(s) submits an application</li> <li>Possible topics: Citizen Science, Big History, Mindfulness, and more...</li> </ul>	TBD



<b>Inspiration Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Custom PD for schools to support work on a problem of practice</li> <li>● 10-12 hours of face-to-face PD over two non-consecutive days</li> <li>● Virtual follow-up and/or coaching (see Ongoing Support below)</li> <li>● 1 per year, or as requested</li> <li>● 35 person max (2 facilitators)</li> </ul>	Approx. \$800 per person or \$10,500 + travel per school
<b>Ongoing Support (“Office hours”)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Host a variety of virtual one:one follow-up and group follow-ups via video conferencing</li> <li>● 3.5 hours of follow-up coaching offered to any participant who is in the network, (Network participants are those who attend a Study Visit or other time intensive PD experience).</li> <li>● Within the same year of attending EDEX Collaboratory PD, network members may sign up for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Up to 3 one-hour small group coaching sessions</li> <li>○ Up to 1 thirty minute 1:1 coaching session</li> </ul> </li> <li>● “Office Hours” includes three hours of virtual facilitated coaching time each week             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small group coaching: Network participants sign up online and connect virtually for coached facilitation addressing a problem of practice, up to 5 participants per session</li> <li>○ 1:1 coaching: Network participants may sign up online for 30 minute 1:1 coaching offered for one hour per week</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Additionally, lead and participate in Twitter chats and the private network Facebook group</li> </ul>	Included in the price of Study Visits and Inspiration Project
<b>Annual Network Meetup</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Network benefit</li> <li>● Gathering and celebration for educators, guests, and leaders who participated in PD</li> <li>● Student work showcase</li> <li>● Keynote speaker</li> </ul>	\$30 per person
<b>In-network visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Free tours for international guests will continue to be scheduled as requested.</li> <li>● Educators serving as part of the EDEX Collaboratory Advisory Group receive a credit towards PD</li> </ul>	N/A

## **Educational Service Offerings: 2020-2021**

In 2020-2021 the EDEX Collaboratory will continue to offer the core programs and begin offering professional learning opportunities that expand the work and increase the scale. A primary goal will be to secure external funding in order to reduce costs for teachers and to allow EDEX Collaboratory to share resources openly and generously. Potential future offerings include further developing the “freemium” business model. This would include free blog and podcast offerings that encourage enrollment in a network with blended 6-8 week paid online courses. Additionally, we plan to increase the network through access to regularly created and curated content including blogs and podcasts. Creating online content will be introduced gradually to ensure consistent high quality that exceeds customer expectations. High quality content is critical to attracting and retaining customers and positioning our brand. These new online offerings will require an investment of research, creativity, tech development, and resources. Also, the capstone celebratory Network Meetup event will transition into a 1-day conference in 2022 and showcase, further enhancing the value EdEx Collaboratory provides.

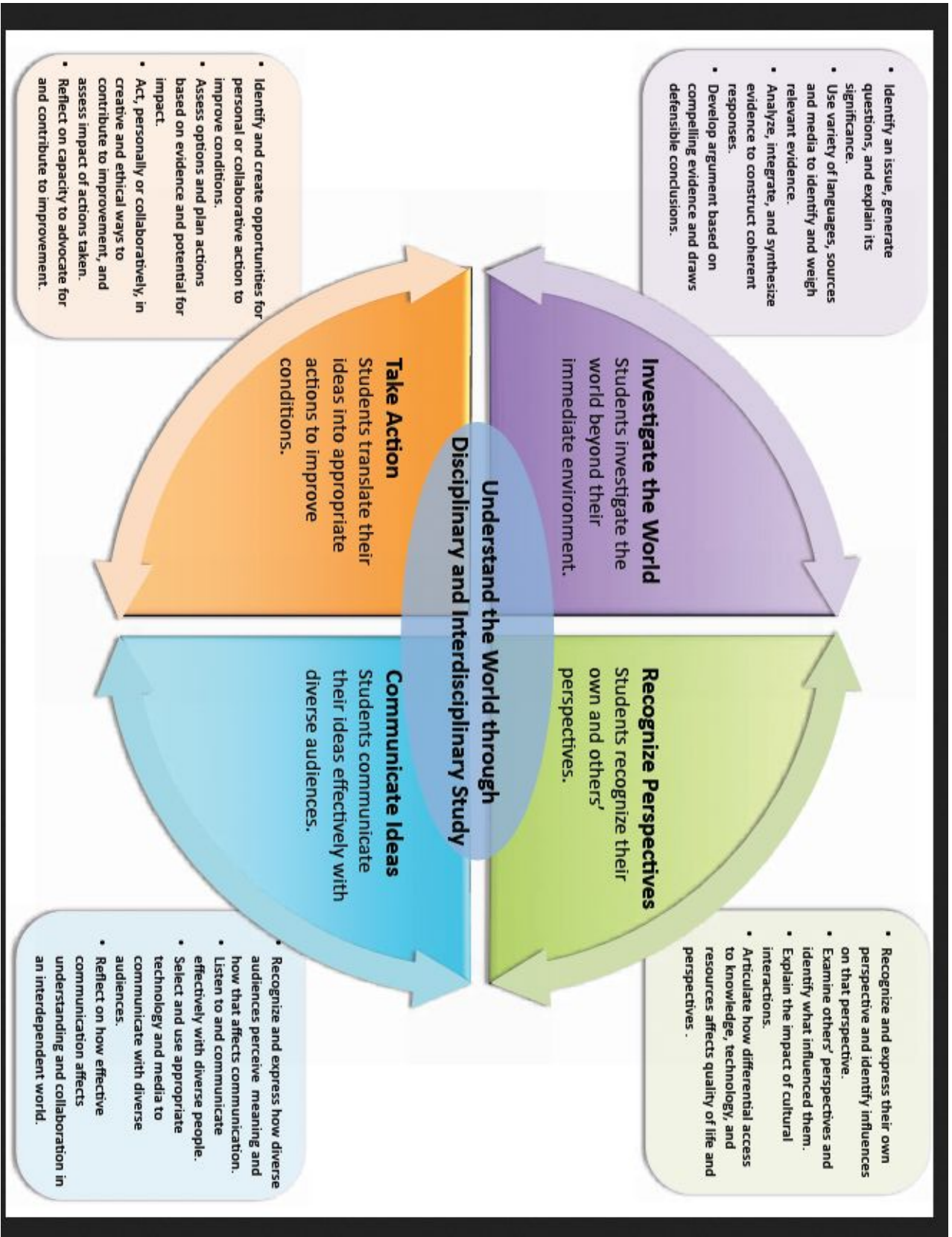
Potential new revenue streams may include:

- Amazon Services LLC Associates Program: Posting an “On Our Shelf” webpage with direct links to purchase titles through Amazon. As part of the Amazon Services LLC Associates Program, an affiliate advertising program, EDEX Collaboratory earns 5-7% of purchase amounts when readers purchase items linked from our website to Amazon.com and affiliated sites.
- Podcast sponsorships: Each free podcast will have one or two 45-second sponsorships carefully selected from companies and organizations that align with the mission and vision of EDEX Collaboratory. Each sponsorship will be read by the podcaster at the start of an episode.
- Teachers Pay Teachers: Creating complementary digital products and listing them for free or for sale under Teachers Pay Teachers.
- Online courses: Creating 6-8 week online courses
- Subscription services: Digital and/or physical content delivered at regular intervals to paid subscribers

## **Subject Areas for Professional Development**

Professional development offerings will not be limited to specific subject areas as the EDEX Collaboratory will evolve and feature in-demand relevant programs. Subjects for professional development will align with the values of Exploris since the EDEX Collaboratory and The Exploris School essentially share a brand and one entity can influence external perception of the other. This includes topics emphasizing global education which has been central to the work of The Exploris School since its inception in 1997.

## Core Competencies of Global Education



<https://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>

With global education at the core of its model, The Exploris School is also equipped to provide expert guidance and support in:

- Project-based Learning (PBL)
- STEM
- Service-learning
- Design Thinking
- Standards-based grading and the assessment/reflection cycle (including student-led portfolio conferences)
- Social-emotional learning
- Co-teaching
- Interdisciplinary Curriculum Design
- Citizen Science
- Big History

EDEX Collaboratory will also serve as an incubator and testing ground for new teachings at the School. Additionally, school-level innovations will lead to new EDEX Collaboratory program offerings. This collaborative relationship will continue to keep Exploris at the forefront of education, benefitting not only Exploris students and teachers but those in the community and larger population as well.

### **Method of Teaching**

The EDEX Collaboratory will use a hands-on experiential approach, as opposed to lecturing or slideshows, as that is the Exploris way of teaching and will be more engaging for the audience. With hands-on learning experiences, the audience will be better equipped to take what they learned and implement the findings into their classroom. Study Visits will be delivered in a way that the teachings are actionable and pragmatic, providing real-world value to the participants. Additionally, time will be spent in classrooms followed by debriefing observations as well as opportunities to speak directly with teachers and staff. Access to current practitioners gives the EDEX Collaboratory a unique advantage over external educational consultants who are out of the classroom environment and hired to lead professional development.

### **Online Supplemental Support**

The EDEX Collaboratory will also offer online supplemental coaching for network members to support implementation and achieve goals, and develop a cohort model where the educator feels part of a supportive group. "When implementing an educational approach, providing ongoing support to teachers through coaching, workshops, and supervision has been shown to have a substantial impact on student outcomes... Professional learning communities are an important part of teachers' continuous development..." (Vaughan and Albers 2017).

As teachers (especially innovative teachers) can often feel isolated and exhausted, providing additional support and contact beyond the in-person learning is paramount to the experience of The EDEX Collaboratory. "Decades of low pay and overcrowded classrooms have affected teacher health and job satisfaction: A new study found that 93 percent of elementary school teachers experience high levels of stress. Beyond long hours and heavy

workload, teachers report feeling “emotional exhaustion” (Terada, 2018). The online supplemental coaching is an important part of developing the network to maximize teacher growth and satisfaction.

### **Benefits of an Online Community**

- Drastically lowers barriers to teachers participating in professional development (cost, time off school, sub fees, travel, etc)
- Provide convenience and flexibility to not have to commit to a specific event date
- Eliminates the burden/cost of taking Exploris teachers out of the classroom
- Allows the impact of the event to go beyond the workshop which is necessary for lasting effectiveness
- The combination of on-site followed by online interaction allows personal relationships to grow, as opposed to solely online communities with no face-to-face
- Strengthens the network of EDEX Collaboratory participants

### **Execution of Online Support**

The key to executing ongoing learning support will be providing value for the customer while making sure it isn't overly burdensome or time-consuming for EDEX Collaboratory staff, including paid Exploris teachers, to be involved. In addition to being active on social media, online support will include a variety of virtual one-on-one follow-up and group follow-ups via video conferencing. Three and a half hours of follow-up coaching will be offered to any participant who is in the network. Within the same year of attending EDEX Collaboratory professional development, network members may sign up for:

- Up to 3 one-hour small group coaching sessions
- Up to 1 thirty minute 1:1 coaching session

## **D. BRAND**

The EDEX Collaboratory will maintain a symbiotic relationship with The Exploris School. The name, look and feel of the EDEX Collaboratory should be tied to The Exploris School so that it is clear these organizations are affiliated.

Some reasons for this are:

- Transparency for funding
- Transparency that the EDEX Collaboratory is governed by and founded by Exploris members
- Exploris already has strong name recognition and brand value
- Exploris has a positive reputation and notoriety in the community for being at the forefront of education

## E. PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

As consumers move away from paying attention to outbound marketing tactics, including paid ads or any messages that interrupt or are not opt-in, the EDEX Collaboratory should use a more grassroots, organic strategy to spread the word.

Strategies	Description	Cost
Blog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draws educators in with relevant, curated and engaging information</li> <li>● Gives a glimpse into what Exploris is about and entices audience to attend a paid program</li> <li>● Highlights Exploris Expeditions and student experiences</li> </ul>	Labor costs
Search Engine Optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make sure the site is optimized so the right people can find us</li> </ul>	Labor costs
Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personalized outreach to targeted media outlets and educational listservs</li> <li>● Piggy-back on breaking ground of new building</li> <li>● Determine multiple angles of stories for various outlets</li> <li>● Press releases</li> </ul>	Labor costs
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lead and participate in social media discussions on Facebook and Twitter</li> <li>● Garner attention, gain new followers (potential customers) and increase credibility as influencers in education</li> </ul>	Labor costs
Newsletter banner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Place ads/space in newsletter read by our target audience</li> </ul>	Need to get pricing
Email Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create homegrown list of attendees of free tours, email sign-ups on website</li> <li>● Offer promotions to share with friend/colleague</li> </ul>	Potential small subscription fee for email marketing system
Exhibit or sponsor conferences/local forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attend and present at conferences</li> <li>● Encourage other Exploris educators to present at conferences</li> <li>● Share upcoming PD opportunities during conference presentations</li> </ul>	Cost of conference registration fees and travel

Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organically spread the word to new audiences that fit our target market</li> <li>• Boost credibility by collaborating with other high caliber organizations</li> <li>• Do joint PR articles and have partners link to our website for increased visibility and to help with SEO</li> </ul>	Labor costs
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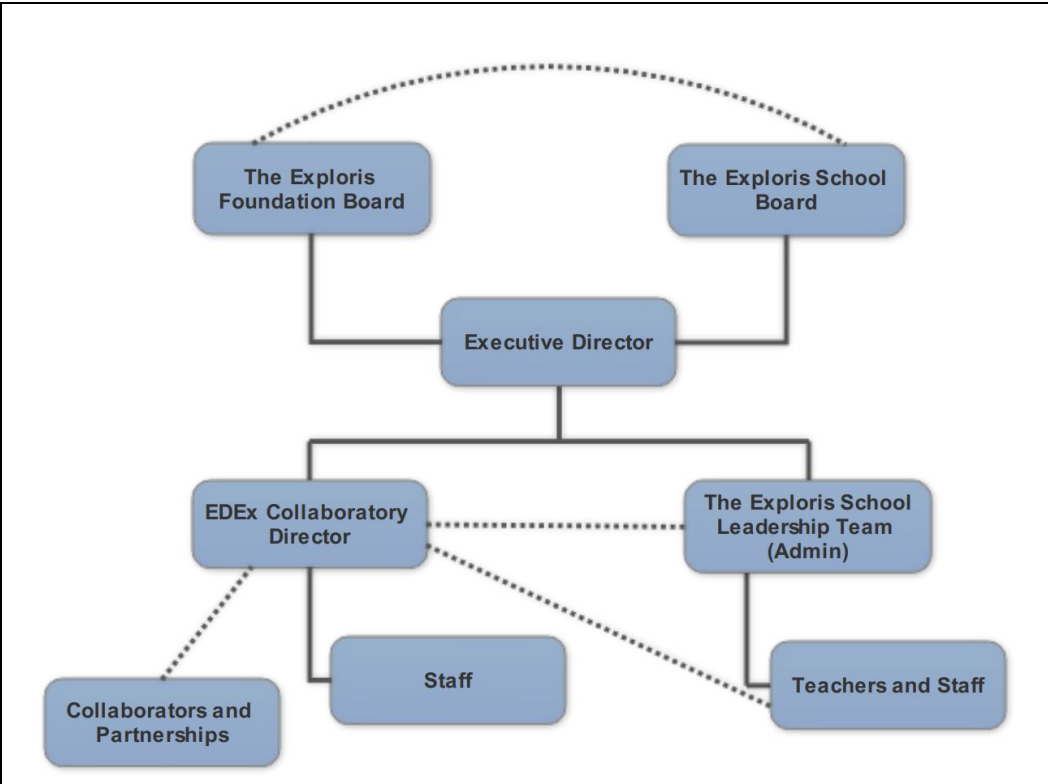
**4. STAKEHOLDERS**

**A. THE TEAM**

There will be a combination of employee(s) working for the EDEX Collaboratory including a director and additional EDEX Collaboratory staff in Year 2. Additionally, guest instructors will lead professional learning and play an active role as part of the paid EDEX Collaboratory team.

**Organizational Structure**

The EDEX Collaboratory director would report to the executive director of The Exploris School to ensure alignment of mission and vision between the two organizations.



## **Director of the EDEX Collaboratory**

Beginning in 2019-2020 the EDEX Collaboratory will need the minimum equivalent of 1 full-time employee. This could be a full-time director who drives all program offerings, manages the relationship with Exploris administration and teachers, external stakeholders, funding/grant writing, and is responsible for profits/losses. The ambitious nature of the project would benefit from more than one salaried employee, however, the reality of funding makes it most likely that the EDEX Collaboratory director will be the only salaried employee during the upcoming school year.

Consider structuring this/these roles as salaried positions using a billable hours model with the expectation that one full-time employee would bill 38 hours per week (not counting lunch, breaks, etc). A billable hours model will help track both funding and time. Tracking billable hours will make grant monitoring and reporting easier and more accurate, especially when managing funding from a variety of sources. Also, due to the need to actively secure funding, manage marketing and operations, and create and deliver programming, billable hours will provide helpful data for tracking progress and deliverables as well as help the employee(s) strive for work-life balance.

<b>Full-time Director Responsibilities</b>	<b>Estimated Percentage of Time</b>
<p><b>Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Securing funding (grant writing, meeting with potential sponsors/donors)</li> <li>● Marketing (including blogging, social media, email marketing, speaking opportunities, etc.)</li> <li>● Developing partnerships with influencers and like-minded organizations</li> </ul>	30%
<p><b>Admin:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fiscal responsibilities (budgeting, profit/loss, billing, grant reporting)</li> <li>● Payroll</li> <li>● Oversight of contracted Exploris teachers</li> <li>● Managing event sign ups, communication with attendees, payments</li> <li>● School related meetings, duties, and/or coverage</li> <li>● Serve on the Exploris Foundation Board</li> </ul>	30%
<p><b>Professional Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creating, planning, prepping, and leading professional development</li> <li>● Leading on-going support and hosting office hours and virtual follow up</li> <li>● Coordinating spaces and vendors for PD</li> <li>● Training and co-developing PD with guest presenters and sub-contractors</li> </ul>	40%



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize and lead the EDEX Collaboratory Advisory Group</li></ul> |  |
|---|--|

### **Guest Instructors**

Guest instructors will submit an application and detailed proposal for the professional development they would like to offer. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Guest instructors will be offered a contract for supplemental pay and hired at one of two levels: collaborator and leader. Contracts will outline an add-on job title and stipend/other perks for their efforts taking place outside of the normal work day. The payments will be stipend-based instead of billable hours and will be set according to level (collaborator, leader) and approximate hours leading professional development. Also, built into each accepted application will be time that the director spends preparing and coaching guest instructors to guarantee that teaching styles and philosophies are aligned with EDEX Collaboratory vision and standard of quality programming. Contracts will be paid in installments. Additionally, guest instructors will receive a title and be featured on the EDEX Collaboratory webpage. Care will be taken to ensure that involvement of any classroom teachers will not detract from their instructional time with students.

### **Social Media Ambassadors**

As the network grows, there will be a need for social media ambassadors to help with replying to comments on social media accounts, organizing and running Twitter chats, and being active participants in the private Facebook group. Ambassadors must have a strong educational background and align with EDEX Collaboratory mission and vision. Interested ambassadors will submit an application and applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Ambassadors will be offered a contract for supplemental pay. Contracts will outline an add-on job title and stipend/other perks for their efforts outside of their normal work hours. The payments will be stipend-based instead of billable hours.

### **2020 and Beyond**

Expansion plans starting in 2020-2021 will require additional staff to grow and expand to produce the ambitious work outlined in the business plan. Again, a combination of fulltime and part time roles may fulfill these duties. Additional options may include offering paid internships that target local college students and/or recent graduates.

### **Time Allocation for Program Planning**

It is important to understand that leading quality professional development takes many hours of preparation and follow-up, especially when the offering is new. To help with budgeting for program development and service delivery, the following formulas are suggested:

Type of Professional Development	Time Allocation (ratio)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching (Face-to-face or virtual)</li> </ul>	2 hours of prep/follow-up: 1 hour of delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NEW or Custom professional learning</li> </ul>	4 hours prep/follow-up: 1 hour of delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning (repeated/not new)</li> </ul>	2.5 hours prep/follow-up: 1 hour of delivery

Although some tasks will get faster and more automated over time, shortcuts can't be made for many of the tasks necessary to lead professional learning. The employees of the EDEX Collaboratory will need to strive for efficiency, yet be realistic about the time it takes to prepare high quality professional learning experiences that motivates our customers to thrive.

**School Staff**

The EDEX Collaboratory will be a schoolwide endeavour. The EDEX Collaboratory will highlight the incredible work of the Exploris staff including celebrating the growth mindset and problem solving skills embraced on campus. There will be guests touring through rooms, staff may be asked to meet with attendees during planning, or as part of a teacher panel. Also, teachers and staff will be invited to networking events and attendees will be eager to hear staff perspectives. It will be important to maintain open communication and a symbiotic relationship between the EDEX Collaboratory and The Exploris School. Teachers at Exploris are regarded as leaders and innovators in their field and there is room for everyone at the table.

**B. ADVISORY GROUP**

There will be an EDEX Collaboratory Advisory Group. We will seek out our state's futurist thinkers and educational innovators to meet regularly and brainstorm action items for the EDEX Collaboratory and beyond. Interested participants will apply and applicants will be considered twice per year. Individuals serve a two-year commitment, but may apply to remain part of the educator advisory group beyond the initial two years. This group will be our core influencers including community, business, and education leaders. Influencers are important to any new organization looking to garner attention and engage a new audience. They offer credibility and the catalytic energy to make a change in an industry. Our advisory group members will not be paid. However, educators serving as part of the EDEX Collaboratory Advisory Group will receive a credit to attend EDEX Collaboratory PD.

**C. POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS**

The Exploris School way is to develop meaningful partnerships as a project begins. The EDEX Collaboratory is in its early planning stages and partnerships have not yet been actively

pursued. However, it will remain an important goal to strengthen partnerships and collaborate with other leaders in education. We suggest the EDEX Collaboratory staff start by joining and/or actively participating in the [Triangle Learning Network](#) and the [Go Open NC](#) campaign.

Additionally, leadership should consider exploring new partnerships with the following organizations: The Big History Project, The Innovation Project (TIP), North Carolina Colleges of Education, Natural Learning Initiative, NCCAT, Leadership + Design, and EDNC.

The following are current professional learning partnerships that exist either through the school or through key influencers on staff.

<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>Benefit</b>
<p>NC Museum of Natural Sciences (NCMNS) &amp; PBL Fellows</p>	<p>A Memorandum of Understanding exists between Exploris and the NCMNS establishing the two institutions as partners (2008).</p> <p>PBL Fellows is an established professional learning program currently in its third year and housed at the NCMNS led in partnership with Exploris teachers. PBL Fellows models the type of effective PD the EDEX Collaboratory will offer.</p> <p>The NCMNS is an established institution and the education staff is open to partnering in any capacity that supports the mission and vision of both institutions.</p>
<p>Design for Change (DFC)</p>	<p>Exploris has formally participated in Design for Change projects since 2015. Exploris students have earned top honors in the nation for three years in a row and were selected to attend the international DFC conference in 2016. There is a strong connection between DFC and the values and work of The Exploris School.</p> <p>Currently, Exploris staff are leading a DFC cohort in its first year. This cohort is a hybrid virtual and in-person model.</p> <p>Two Exploris staff currently hold the title of North Carolina's Champions for Change.</p> <p>Design for Change is looking to expand its</p>

	reach in the United States.
Citizen Science and North Carolina State University (NCSU)	<p>Exploris teachers and students collaborate with local scientists from NCSU, NCMNS, and the Museum of Life and Sciences to involve 100% of Exploris students in Citizen Science projects each year.</p> <p>An Exploris staff member and three students (grades 2, 7, and 8) presented at the national citizen science conference, CitSci, in March 2019.</p>
<p>University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program</p> <p>UNCW Innovation Network - Teacher Advisory</p>	<p>Exploris staff provided PBL unit mentoring for current UNCW MAT students.</p> <p>Exploris staff led PD session for UNCW MAT students and hosted a site visit.</p>
U.S. Green Ribbon - NC Consultant	Exploris staff consulted NC schools on the Green Ribbon certification process. Also, school staff published a ten-part series through EdNC.
Peaceful Schools NC	<p>Peaceful Schools NC establishes relationships with partner schools who receive ongoing professional development in creating and sustaining healthy learning environments. Based out of the Carolina Friends School in Durham, NC, Peaceful Schools NC is run by teachers, for teachers.</p> <p>The Exploris School plans to partner with Peaceful Schools NC for the 2019-2020 school year. Although still under development, the plan is that some contract hours will be reserved for the EDEX Collaboratory for the purpose of guidance with the business side of the EDEX Collaboratory.</p>

## **6. FINANCIALS**

### **A. OPERATING BUDGET**

Like other schools offering professional development, the EDEX Collaboratory will need the support of external funding to be financially sustainable and, when possible, offset professional development costs for educators. Securing external funding will be imperative for reaching the goals and vision outlined in this business plan.

The projected operating budget for 2019-2020 includes a total revenue of \$141,320, total costs amount of goods and services of \$19,755, total gross margin of \$1,565, and total operating expenses including a 5% reserve and salaries and benefits of \$121,463. These projections include \$120,000 of fundraising to offset costs and keep prices low for teachers. Detailed financial projections and assumptions can be found in Appendix B and linked [HERE](#).

Each year the EDEX Collaboratory will need to raise external funds. For year three, 2021-2022, and beyond it is the intent of the EDEX Collaboratory to begin the creation of an endowment.

### **B. FUNDRAISING**

There is a goal to raise \$500,000 in three years and begin funding for an endowment. Reaching these goals will increase access and keep costs low for individual educators. We will raise funds from a variety of sources.

#### **Grants and Foundations**

Securing significant grant funding will be essential to reach the goals of the EDEX Collaboratory. When looking at fundraising options and the foundations that have funded similar initiatives, an important factor to many grant funders is supporting a cause that delivers equitable education to all children regardless of economic status. Exploris's new weighted lottery system and our continued plan to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students should be highlighted. Additionally, the fact that we are not focusing on a single subject area in our programs should aid in being considered by a broader range of foundations. We will look at both local and national grant opportunities and also foundations that have funded similar initiatives. However, the grant cycle takes significant amount of time. Other funding options will need to be considered to support the work of the EDEX Collaboratory for the 2019-2020 school year.

The Exploris School and its staff have received grants, in-kind donations, and awards from The Burroughs Wellcome Fund, The Fletcher Academy, Communities In Schools, and The Morgan Creek Foundation. In addition to previous and current donors, new relationships will need to be developed.

### **Corporate Sponsors**

The EDEX Collaboratory will seek support from corporate partners that align with our mission and vision. Corporate sponsors will be recognized as supporters of education. Also, sponsors will receive recognition for their support both online and in print materials.

### **Donations**

There will need to be significant fundraising through donations in order to get the EDEX Collaboratory up and running in August 2019. Securing funding will become the primary initiative for the next three months.

## 8. TIMELINE

Date	Milestone
3/20/19	Review by Foundation Board
3/25/19	Lead School Tour
4/10/19	Lead School Tour
4/25/19	Business Plan and Executive Summary complete
5/1/19	Name and Mission Statement
5/1/19	Register name
5/1/19	Purchase domain and website
5/15/19	Logo and “one sheet” complete
5/15/19	Post job and accept applications
6/1/19	K-8 Expedition Snapshots are ready to be published online
6/1/19	Begin fundraising/applying to grants
7/15/19	Draft website is complete, ready for feedback
6/15/19	Interview and make an offer to EDEX Collaboratory director
8/15/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create content</li> <li>● Website fully functional</li> <li>● Marketing materials designed &amp; purchased</li> <li>● Select dates for PD offerings</li> <li>● Registration begins</li> <li>● Marketing begins</li> </ul>
9/15/19	Interview and select guest instructors and social media ambassadors
9/2019	First program of 2019-2020 is offered

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## APPENDIX

### A. OVERVIEW OF SELECTED COMPETITION

#### Comparison of Online Professional Learning Resources

Online Resources	Details	Offerings
<p><b>Edutopia</b></p> <p>The George Lucas Foundation</p> <p><a href="https://www.edutopia.org/">https://www.edutopia.org/</a></p>	<p>Website featuring “what works in education” through blog entries and videos highlighting innovation and best practices</p> <p>Staff and guest bloggers write blogs</p> <p>Guest bloggers are paid a stipend per published blog entry</p> <p>Over 1.3 million facebook fans</p> <p>Over 1 million twitter followers</p> <p>Over 2 million website visitors per month</p>	<p>Blogs and videos about many topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment</li> <li>- Integrated studies</li> <li>- PBL</li> <li>- Social emotional learning</li> <li>- Teacher development</li> <li>- Technology integration</li> </ul> <p>All content is free</p>

Online Resources	Details	Offerings
<p><b>The Epic Classroom</b></p> <p>Trevor Muir</p> <p><a href="http://www.trevormuir.com/">http://www.trevormuir.com/</a></p>	<p>Trevor Muir’s work emphasizes creative thinking, real-world PBL, and motivational support on how to make teaching and learning “epic”</p> <p>Motivational YouTube Channel has several videos with the most viewed video having 47,000 views</p> <p>3,500 Twitter followers</p>	<p>1-day PBL workshops (paid)</p> <p>Free videos and blogs with podcasts (weekly)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- YouTube Channel</li> </ul> <p>One published books on Amazon</p> <p>Speaking engagements including conferences and keynotes and school-based PD</p>

Online Resources	Details	Offerings
<p><b>The Creative Classroom</b></p> <p>John Spencer</p> <p><a href="http://www.spencerauthor.com/">http://www.spencerauthor.com/</a></p>	<p>John Spencer’s work emphasizes creative thinking, design thinking, making/ makerspaces, PBL, and motivational support</p> <p>Spencer’s online courses are hosted through the website, Blend</p> <p>14,000+ Twitter followers</p>	<p>Online courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7 courses: 5 paid, 2 free</li> </ul> <p>Free videos and blogs with podcasts (weekly)</p> <p>Two published books on Amazon</p> <p>Free online tools and booklets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LAUNCH Design Thinking</li> <li>- Empower</li> <li>- PBL</li> <li>- Flow Theory</li> </ul> <p>Speaking engagements including conferences and keynotes and school-based PD</p>

Online Resources	Details	Offerings
<p><b>Cult of Pedagogy</b></p> <p>Jennifer Gonzalez</p> <p><a href="https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/">https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/</a></p>	<p>Jennifer Gonzalez’s work emphasizes technology integration strategies as well as effective ELA teaching strategies and motivational support</p> <p>According to Gonzalez’s website, her work receives over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100,000 unique downloads per month</li> <li>- 23,000 downloads per month per podcast episode</li> </ul> <p>Gonzalez’s online courses are hosted through the website, Blend</p> <p>86,000 Twitter followers</p>	<p>Paid online courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jumpstart: Technology</li> <li>- Twitter for Teachers</li> </ul> <p>Free videos and blogs with podcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Craft, Go Deep, and Teacher Soul (2 per month)</li> </ul> <p>Two books published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 through Amazon and 1 published online</li> </ul> <p>Paid printables through Teachers Pay Teachers</p> <p>Online store for “swag”, courses, recommended books, and materials</p>

		Speaking engagements including conferences and keynotes and school-based PD
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Online Resources	Details	Offerings
<p><b>The Cornerstone for Teachers</b></p> <p>Angela Watson</p> <p><a href="https://thecornerstoneforteachers.com/">https://thecornerstoneforteachers.com/</a></p>	<p>Angela Watson emphasizes strategies to help teaching being effective, efficient, and enjoyable</p> <p>Her work is a blend of motivational principles and practical tips</p> <p>According to Watson's website, her work receives over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50,000 downloads of podcast per month</li> <li>- 8 million individual web page views in 2018</li> <li>- 135,000 followers on Facebook</li> <li>- 45,000 followers on Pinterest</li> </ul> <p>Over 18,500 Twitter followers</p> <p>Online courses are hosted through Watson' website</p>	<p>Paid online courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 40 Hour Teacher Workweek Club</li> <li>- Finally Free</li> <li>- Proactive Behavior Management Course</li> </ul> <p>Free blogs with podcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Truth for Teachers (weekly)</li> </ul> <p>Five published books on Amazon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two active online Book Club Communities</li> </ul> <p>Paid printables through Teachers Pay Teachers</p> <p>Speaking engagements including conferences and keynotes and school-based PD</p>

## **Comparison of Schools Leading Professional Development**

### **High Tech High (HTH) - network of 14 charter schools in San Diego, CA**

**Funding:** HTH is heavily funded through grants, plus receives revenue from its professional development programs, tours and Graduate School of Education. In 2010, HTH received \$25,000 from the Hewlett Foundation, \$100,000 in 2012 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and \$10.3 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation over 5 years starting in 2018.

#### **Key Takeaways from HTH:**

HTH is operating on a much larger scale than Exploris, but much of what they're doing is relevant and similar to the mission of the EDEX Collaboratory. Characteristics include: PBL-focus, student-led tours, classroom observation, teacher and faculty-led interactive workshops, actionable plans, immersion in the school setting, mentoring by teachers, and opportunities to engage with students and staff.

<b>Professional Development Programs</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Student led tour		Free
Extended Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student guided</li> <li>● Meet w/ HTH leadership</li> <li>● Lunch panel w/ teachers or students</li> <li>● Classroom observations</li> </ul>	\$250 pp
Customer Residencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Help participants implement equitable learning experiences in their context</li> <li>● PBL learning focused</li> <li>● Immersed in K-12 setting for deeper learning</li> </ul>	\$350 pp
GSE PD Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3-day, in-depth experience led by K-12 teachers, students and faculty</li> <li>● Interactive sections with workshops and classroom visits</li> </ul>	\$800 pp
Deeper Learning Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Premier international event for educators who want to implement deeper learning in classroom</li> <li>● Includes materials, meals, dinner reception, morning activities, access to MakerStudio</li> </ul>	\$750 PP

**Mt. Vernon Presbyterian School - Mount Vernon Institute for Innovation (MVIFI) - Atlanta, GA**

MVPS is an independent (tuition-based) K-12 school that promotes real-life learning with the motto, “we blur the lines between school and the real world.”

MVIFI has 8 leaders that also have various roles as MVPS educators, such as the Executive Director of MVIFI also serving as the Chief Learning and Innovation Officer at MVPS and the Upper School Head of Learning at MVPS also serving on the MVIFI “nucleus team”.

**Funding:** MVIFI is heavily funded through grants, such as \$13,200 grant in 2016 from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, \$100,000 in 2017 from the Christian Education Charitable Trust (MacLellan Foundation), and \$100,000 in 2018 from the Edward E. Ford Foundation to enhance the school’s design and maker community through a partnership with the Georgia Institute of Technology Design Bloc.

**Key Takeaways from MVIFI:** MVPS uses MVIFI as a contributor and accelerator for the school and they feel a strong responsibility to strengthen the efforts others are making to enhance people's learning experiences. Their prices are moderately low and they also provide a large amount of valuable free content. This shows they are generous with their sharing of information and committed to being a catalyst for innovation in education on a larger scale.

<b>Professional Development Programs</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>Cost</b>
School Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiential workshop, guided tours and instruction</li> <li>• Networking opportunities</li> </ul>	\$100 pp
FlashLab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8-11:30am</li> <li>• Take a “full lap” in design thinking</li> <li>• Hands-on, fun, collaborative</li> </ul>	\$300 pp
FUSE conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explores possibilities of design thinking, the maker movement, entrepreneurship and innovation</li> <li>• For leaders in education and corporations</li> </ul>	\$895 pp (\$795 early bird)
Fuse Talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar to TedTalks</li> <li>• 4 hours</li> <li>• Series of nationally-renowned speakers</li> </ul>	\$200 pp (\$175 early bird)

### **The Hill Center - Durham, NC**

The Hill Center offers professional development “Empowering Educators to Support Struggling Learners”. Hill draws on its own faculty and in-house trainers, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction trainers, and leading experts to deliver professional development in Hill methodologies, literacy and math instruction, and other instructional strategies to support their students.

<b>Professional Development Programs</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>Cost</b>
One-day workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 8:30am - 3:30pm</li><li>● Includes materials, lunch and documentation for CEUs, free parking</li></ul>	\$350 pp
Online courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 5, self-paced online courses</li><li>● Anytime access to course materials, including downloadable resources for up to a year</li></ul>	\$100 each
Education series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Offered 6-8 times/yr</li><li>● Open to the public and feature various speakers</li></ul>	Free

**Funding:** The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation has been instrumental in Hill’s growth over the years and supported the initial development of their teacher training program in 1990, as well as several other foundations, such as the FM Kirby Foundation, Barnhill Family Foundation and the Oak Foundation.

**Key Takeaways from The Hill Center:** While The Hill Center’s target market is different from the EDEX Collaboratory, the general mission of the professional development and offerings are similar. The Hill Center’s pricing is moderate, particularly for the length of their workshops and the online courses provide a convenient and low cost option for teachers to learn at their own pace.

### **Ron Clark Academy - Atlanta, GA**

The Ron Clark Academy (RCA) is a tuition-free public charter middle school located in Southeast Atlanta. Over 40,000 educators have attended their professional development over 10 years. The campus includes a 44,000 sq ft facility with 14 classrooms, a media center, 2-story slide, a dragon staircase, dance studio and gymnasium.

Professional Development Programs	Additional Information	Cost
One-day training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observe master teachers in action</li> <li>● Attend workshops</li> <li>● Experience school culture and student engagement 8:30am-4:30pm</li> <li>● Subjects include strategies for effective discipline, teaching creatively while achieving high standardized tests</li> </ul>	\$495 pp
Two-day training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● More in-depth, additional observation, strategies, time for reflection</li> </ul>	\$925 pp

**Funding:** RCA has many large corporate sponsors including Coca Cola, Verizon, Delta, Panasonic and BB&T. Also, Oprah Winfrey donated \$5 million that will go towards the creation of the Ryan Marshall Performing Arts Center, a 32,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose facility that will help the school train 150,000 teachers over the next 10 years. RCA spends \$18,000 per student, compared to the per student average in Georgia of \$8900.

**Key Takeaways from RCA:** RCA is the high cost option with all the bells and whistles and the brand of their school fits that model with an over-the-top campus and spokesperson and spending more than twice per student than average in Atlanta. This is very different from Exploris’s brand and track record of doing a lot with a little. While their professional development seems top notch both from an experience and learning perspective, their brand is extremely different from Exploris.

**Research Triangle High School (RTHS) - Research Triangle Park, NC**

RTHS is a 9-12 STEM charter school that is “committed to incubating, proving and scaling innovative methods of teaching and learning, for the express purpose of sharing transformative innovations with the rest of our state.” They have specifically chosen to focus on digital assets as an outreach tool and also address teachers as learners within the community.

Professional Development Programs	Additional Information	Cost
Educator’s showcase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Highlight 3 lesson plans and provide curriculum, including online videos, assignments and tests</li> </ul>	Free



Moodle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online repository of lesson plans from each teacher</li> </ul>	Free
Educator visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosts 200 teachers and school leaders to learn about their model of Personalized Learning</li> <li>• See an entire PL school, observe classrooms and talk to teachers/school leaders</li> </ul>	Free

**Funding:** Their programs are free to attendees and funding is provided by the NCDPI Digital Learning Initiative Grant and The Friday Institute at NC State University. Stipends are available to subs and travel costs.

**Key Takeaways from RTHS:** RTHS holds strong to its commitment to share innovative teaching methods by offering free support for educators although their offerings are not very rich or deep. The online instructional materials posted are inconsistent in quality between teachers. Also, the school offers no follow-up coaching to support implementation of learning.

## B. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

Link to the financial projections can be found [HERE](#).

The financial projections link includes six sheets:

- Overview
- Profit & Loss Year
- Profit & Loss Quarter
- Sales Projections
- Costs of Goods Sold
- Staffing Plan
- Expenses

Screenshots of Profit & Loss Year are included here.

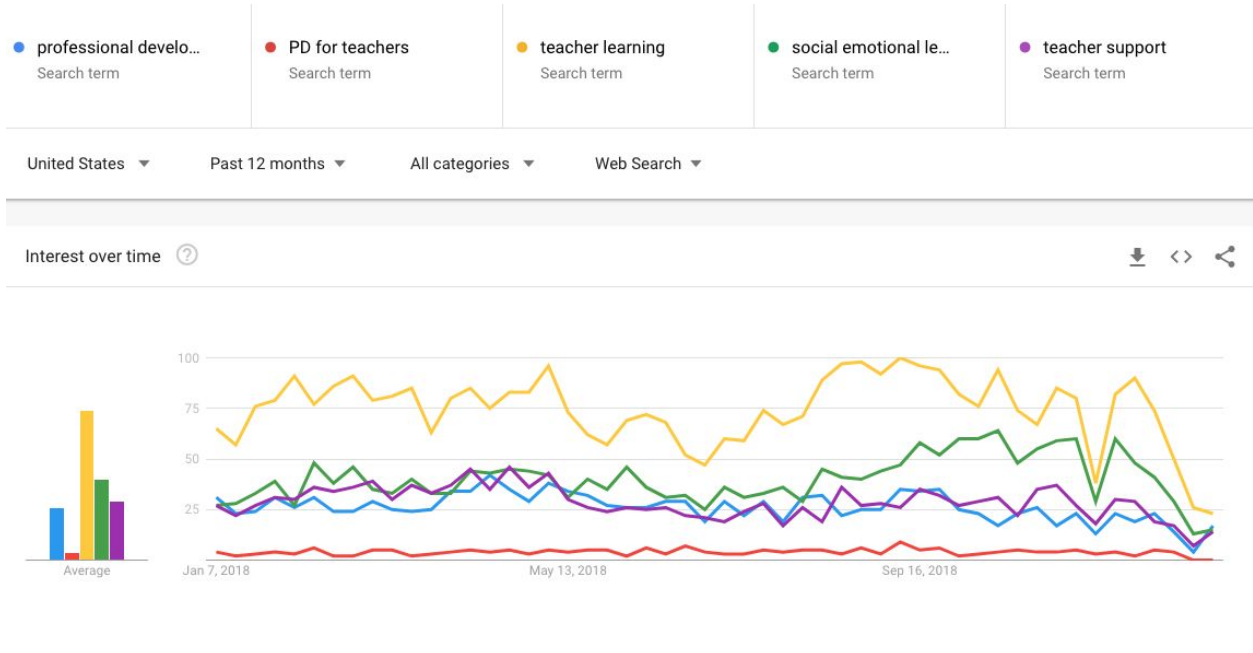
P & L by Year									
		Source	2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		
<b>Revenue</b>									
	School Tours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	School Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ 1,500	7%	\$ 1,750	4%	\$ 2,000	2%	
	Study Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ 6,000	28%	\$ 12,250	27%	\$ 14,000	13%	
	Guest Expert PD	P&L By Qtr	\$ 4,000	19%	\$ 8,000	17%	\$ 8,000	7%	
	Inspiration Project	P&L By Qtr	\$ 8,000	38%	\$ 8,000	17%	\$ 16,000	15%	
	Network Celebration	P&L By Qtr	\$ 1,800	8%	\$ 2,400	5%	\$ -	0%	
	Network Conference	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ 18,750	17%	
	Office Hours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	Online Network	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ 5,625	12%	\$ 33,125	30%	
	Podcast Sponsors	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ 8,000	17%	\$ 18,000	16%	
	Amazon Affiliate	P&L By Qtr	\$ 20	0%	\$ 125	0%	\$ 280	0%	
	Teachers Pay Teachers	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	Total Revenue		<b>\$ 21,320</b>	100%	<b>\$ 46,150</b>	100%	<b>\$ 110,155</b>	100%	

COGS									
	School Tours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	School Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ 645	3%	\$ 753	2%	\$ 860	2%	
	Study Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ 7,200	36%	\$ 12,600	38%	\$ 14,400	33%	
	Guest Expert PD	P&L By Qtr	\$ 7,200	36%	\$ 14,400	44%	\$ 14,400	33%	
	Inspiration Project	P&L By Qtr	\$ 3,600	18%	\$ 3,600	11%	\$ 7,200	17%	
	Network Celebration	P&L By Qtr	\$ 1,110	6%	\$ 1,480	5%	\$ -	0%	
	Network Conference	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ 6,438	15%	
	Office Hours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	Online Network	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
			<b>\$ 19,755</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>\$ 32,833</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>\$ 43,298</b>	<b>39%</b>	
Gross Margin									
	School Tours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	School Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ 855	55%	\$ 998	7%	\$ 1,140	2%	
	Study Visits	P&L By Qtr	\$ (1,200)	-77%	\$ (350)	-3%	\$ (400)	-1%	
	Guest Expert PD	P&L By Qtr	\$ (3,200)	-204%	\$ (6,400)	-48%	\$ (6,400)	-10%	
	Inspiration Project	P&L By Qtr	\$ 4,400	281%	\$ 4,400	33%	\$ 8,800	13%	
	Network Celebration	P&L By Qtr	\$ 690	44%	\$ 920	7%	\$ -	0%	
	Network Conference	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ 12,313	18%	
	Office Hours	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	Online Network	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ 5,625	42%	\$ 33,125	50%	
	Podcast Sponsors	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ 8,000	60%	\$ 18,000	27%	
	Amazon Affiliate	P&L By Qtr	\$ 20	1%	\$ 125	1%	\$ 280	0%	
	Teachers Pay Teachers	P&L By Qtr	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	
	Total GM		<b>\$ 1,565</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>\$ 13,318</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>\$ 66,858</b>	<b>61%</b>	

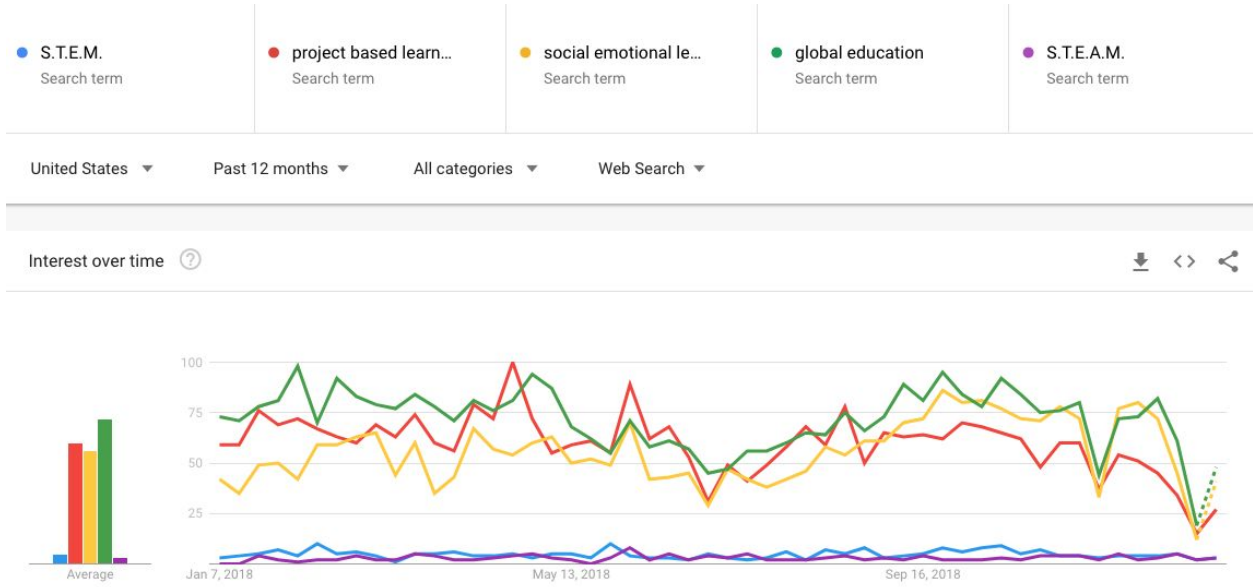
<b>Expenses</b>									
	Employees	P&L By Qtr	\$ 81,120	67%	\$ 133,215	71%	\$ 168,850	70%	
	Facilities	P&L By Qtr	\$ 9,360	8%	\$ 9,360	5%	\$ 18,000	7%	
	Professional Services	P&L By Qtr	\$ 7,161	6%	\$ 7,161	4%	\$ 7,161	3%	
	Operations	P&L By Qtr	\$ 11,356	9%	\$ 21,701	12%	\$ 28,721	12%	
	Marketing	P&L By Qtr	\$ 5,400	4%	\$ 5,400	3%	\$ 4,400	2%	
	Other	P&L By Qtr	\$ 7,066	6%	\$ 11,058	6%	\$ 14,258	6%	
	Operating Exp.		<b>\$ 121,463</b>	57%	<b>\$ 187,894</b>	40%	<b>\$ 241,389</b>	21%	
<b>Operating Profit</b>			\$ -562	(119,898) %	\$ -378	(174,577) %	\$ -158	(174,532) %	
<b>Fundraising</b>			<b>\$ 120,000</b>		<b>\$ 175,000</b>		\$175,000		
<b>Annual Profit</b>			<b>\$ 102</b>		<b>\$ 424</b>		<b>\$468</b>		

## C. SUPPORTING DATA AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

1. Google Trends analysis showing 12 month search volume of the following phrases: “professional development for teachers”, “PD for teachers”, “teacher learning”, “social emotional learning” and “teacher support”.



2. Google Trends analysis over 12 month period comparing search volume for phrases: “S.T.E.M.”, “project based learning”, “social emotional learning”, “global education” and “S.T.E.A.M.”



Google Trends analysis over a 12 month period

3. Edutopia.org attracts roughly 2.1M visitors to their site per month. Under “Top Organic Keywords” on the bottom left, you can see the top search terms and volume that visitors are searching for: “edutopia” (this is typical to have the top word be the brand name), “assessment”, “philosophy of education”, “back to school” and “inquiry based learning”. This is a good way to see what educators are searching for/interested in.

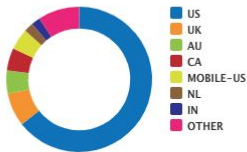
## Domain Overview "edutopia.org"

Desktop Mobile Old version

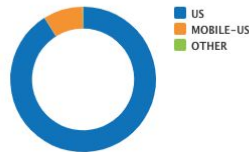
User

ORGANIC SEARCH	PAID SEARCH	BACKLINKS	DISPLAY ADVERTISING
<b>195K</b> <span style="color:red">-2%</span> TRAFFIC	<b>63.7K</b> <span style="color:green">+1%</span> TRAFFIC	<b>8.9M</b> TOTAL BACKLINKS	<b>257</b> TOTAL ADS
SEMrush Rank: 11.3K	Keywords: 1.9K <span style="color:green">0%</span>	Referring Domains: 25.4K	Publishers: 30.1K
Keywords: 150K <span style="color:green">0%</span>	Traffic Cost: \$97.3K <span style="color:green">+1%</span>	Referring IPs: 30.1K	Advertisers: 30.1K
Traffic Cost: \$310K <span style="color:red">-2%</span>			

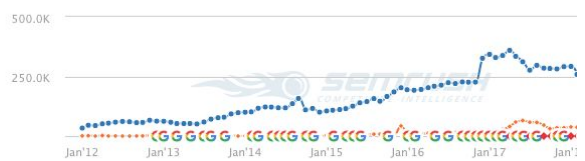
### ORGANIC KEYWORDS



### PAID KEYWORDS



### TRAFFIC TRENDS

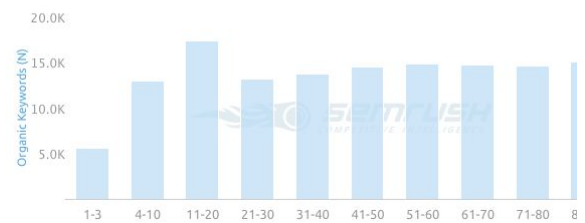


### TOP ORGANIC KEYWORDS (149,516)

Keyword	Pos.	Volume	CPC (USD)	Traffic
<a href="#">edutopia</a>	1 (1)	9,900	1.46	7,920
<a href="#">assessment</a>	4 (4)	110,000	0.60	7,700
<a href="#">philosophy of education</a>	1 (1)	12,100	1.10	5,687
<a href="#">back to school</a>	6 (6)	60,500	3.32	3,025
<a href="#">inquiry based learning</a>	1 (1)	4,400	2.04	2,068

[View full report](#)

### ORGANIC POSITION DISTRIBUTION



4. Top searches on Teachhub.com. This is another way to view what educators are searching for and interested in.

Organic Search Positions 1 - 100 (670) <sup>4</sup> teachhub.com Manage columns 14/14 Expo

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Pos. ↕	Diff. ↕	Traffic ↕	Volume ↕	KD% ↕	CPC (USD) ↕	URL	Costs (USD) ↕	Com. ↕	Results ↕	Volume Trend	SERP	Last Update
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	vocabulary strategies	1 → 1	0	611	1,300	72.54	2.16	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/vocabulary-strategies">http://www.tea...lary</a>	1.3K	0.02	103M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	smart boards in the classroom	1 → 1	0	470	1,000	74.21	1.84	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/smart-boards-in-the-classroom">http://www.tea...ards</a>	864	1.00	48.1M			Dec 27, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	professional goals examples for teachers	1 → 1	0	338	720	56.65	2.18	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/professional-goals-examples-for-teachers">http://www.tea...oals</a>	737	0.12	85.5M			Dec 27, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	hands on activities	1 → 1	0	338	720	73.01	1.10	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/hands-on-activities">http://www.tea...ties</a>	372	0.08	832M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	facts about teachers	1 → 1	0	338	720	64.59	1.84	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/facts-about-teachers">http://www.tea...acts</a>	622	0.05	609M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	professional goals for teachers	1 → 1	0	338	720	61.38	1.55	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/professional-goals-for-teachers">http://www.tea...oals</a>	524	0.16	229M			Dec 27, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	list of professional goals for teachers	1 → 1	0	225	480	59.88	1.83	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/list-of-professional-goals-for-teachers">http://www.tea...oals</a>	412	0.16	105M			Dec 27, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	teaching skills	3 → 3	0	171	1,900	64.57	3.23	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/teaching-skills">http://www.tea...ster</a>	552	0.03	578M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21st century teacher	1 → 1	0	150	320	63.49	1.24	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/21st-century-teacher">http://www.tea...ooks</a>	186	0.12	90.5M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	valentine day activities for high school students	1 → 1	0	150	320	69.65	0.00	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/valentine-day-activities-for-high-school-students">http://www.tea...ties</a>	0	0.07	68.6M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	literacy night	1 → 1	0	150	320	72.46	0.00	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/literacy-night">http://www.tea...ight</a>	0	0.04	87.9M			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	fun review games	1 → 1	0	122	260	56.06	0.91	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/fun-review-games">http://www.tea...now</a>	111	0.02	1.4B			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	professional development skills	1 → 1	0	122	260	79.17	0.00	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/professional-development-skills">http://www.tea...hers</a>	0	0.06	1.4B			Dec 28, 2018
>	<input type="checkbox"/>	morning	4 → 4	0	112	1,600	72.86	0.83	<a href="http://www.teachhub.com/morning">http://www.tea...tina</a>	92	0.06	1B			Dec 28, 2018