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MEMORANDUM

FROM: **Penn Hill Group**
DATE: **September 18, 2014**
SUBJECT: **Investing in Innovation (i3) Scale-Up Briefing**

i3 Scale-Up Briefing: Investing in Innovation (i3)
“Using Evidence to Improve Our Nation's Schools”

Overview:

On September 15, 2014, Success for All Foundation, the KIPP Foundation, Reading Recovery, and Teach for America convened a briefing and panel to discuss Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) grantees' successes and difficulties since receiving i3 scale-up grants to expand their programs.

Panelists:

- **Robert Slavin**, Director, Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University and Co-Founder & Chairman, Success for All Foundation
- **Freddy Gonzalez**, Chief Learning Officer, KIPP Foundation
- **Jerome D'Agostino**, Professor of Education, The Ohio State University and Grant Director, Reading Recovery
- **Kwame Griffith**, Executive Vice President of Regional Operations, Teach for America
- **Moderator: Sarah Sparks**, Education Week

Opening Remarks:

Sarah Sparks noted that i3 is a three-tiered program in which grants are given in accordance with the tier that a particular model or intervention fits into: the tiers are validation, development or scale-up grants. Sparks noted that there have been 117 i3 grantees since the program began. She said that we should expect to see both successes and failures in i3 scale-up grantees' process. All four panelists are i3 grant scale-up recipients.

Opening Video Presentations:

Teach for America's (TFA) presentation noted that TFA is a national teacher corps of recent college graduates and stated that their i3 grant has allowed the organization to expand their corps size and reach new regions of the country.

Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) Foundation noted that the organization invests in the development of school leaders through the KIPP School Leadership Program. According to **Freddy Gonzales**, since receiving the i3 grant, KIPP has been operating 168 schools and educating 58,000 students, compared to the 82 schools and 23,000 students before the grant.

Reading Recovery noted that it helps students improve their reading skills and literacy. It said it serves 400,000 children in 2,000 schools. **Jerome D'Agostino** specifically mentioned that the

external evaluation done in conjunction with their i3 grant has enabled identification of one of the largest effect sizes of any found in an education experimental study.

Success for All (SFA) noted that it incorporates five strategies into its program to ensure that students succeed: powerful instruction, leadership for continuous improvement, school support and intervention tools, professional development and coaching, and research and results. It said it has served two million students in the last three decades and that its i3 grant allowed the program to add 275,000 students to the Success for All network.

Panel Discussion:

Sparks asked the panelists what they have been able to accomplish with their i3 grants that they couldn't have done otherwise.

Gonzalez said that the KIPP Foundation set three goals to achieve through its i3 grant: to serve 1,000 more leaders, to increase the number of new schools and to serve other districts through the KIPP Design Fellowship. Gonzalez said that KIPP is on track to exceed all three of its goals by the end of its grant period, stating that they have already served 1,200 new leaders, have added more schools, and have created programs to share their leadership training practices.

D'Agostino said the i3 grant has allowed the Reading Recovery program to reach schools in areas where there previously were no Reading Recovery programs; these areas included rural communities, underperforming schools and schools with a high concentration of English language learners. Additionally, he said that the grant has stimulated the infusion of technology and professional development programs into the Reading Recovery program, allowed them to conduct the largest experimental studies in schools (over 1,000 schools) and allowed Reading Recovery to establish relationships with the private sector because of the funding-match requirement of the i3 grant.

Kwame Griffith said that the i3 grant has allowed TFA to increase its number of teachers by 29 percent since 2010. Moreover, Griffith stated that the i3 grant has enabled Teach for America to hire more on-the-ground recruiters, create and grow a historically black college team and initiate native and STEM recruitment. It has allowed Teach for America to increase the diversity of its corps. Griffith said that the percentage of African Americans in the corps has risen from 11 percent in 2010 to 22 percent in 2014. Similarly, Griffith stated that the percentage of Latino corps members has risen from 7 percent to 14 percent.

Robert Slavin said first- and second-year evaluations done as part of the i3 grant have found substantial impacts. Slavin stated that the i3 grant has also allowed Success for All to scale up during a recessionary period. He said that by the end of the grant period SFA will have worked with 420,000 children whose participation that can be attributed solely to the grant. However, Slavin said that this is not enough. He said that there are 55,000 Title I schools and that not all of these schools are affected by the i3 grants. He said that the i3 grants need to be a part of a larger movement toward evidence-based reform.

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Sparks asked what the most challenging aspect has been of growing to scale.

D'Agostino said that the most difficult aspect of scaling up has been reaching rural communities because teachers are not always located near to Reading Recovery teacher



leaders. Likewise, he said that convincing local leaders and rule makers that evidence and effectiveness matter in program implementation has been difficult.

Griffith said that it has also been difficult for Teach for America to reach rural communities and to meet the unique needs of every community. Moreover, Griffith said TFA needs to build the capacity of its corps members to address the more nuanced local issues, which is difficult as TFA has expanded from 39 to 50 regions.

Gonzalez said that it has been difficult for KIPP to continually find talented teacher leaders and to keep replenishing the pipeline of leadership from teachers to principals.

Slavin said that Success for All has faced difficulties scaling up in light of the recession and because of the federal education policy overload on issues such as the Common Core State Standards, Race to the Top and teacher evaluation issues. He said that the i3 grant did allow SFA to take advantage of new things that it might not have been able to address without the grant, such as revising curriculum to fit the Common Core State Standards and using new technology that it otherwise could not afford. He also said that SFA has found a way to make adaptations to the program on a local level, but still keep the core model of SFA.

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Sparks said one of the goals of the i3 program is to disseminate results and she asked Slavin to share how his organization is doing this.

Slavin said that SFA demonstrates that it is possible to make changes in schools at scale. He said that the i3 program can show federal education policymakers that education programs should be based on what works.

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Sparks asked D'Agostino about his experience with the outside evaluation portion of the i3 program.

D'Agostino said that Reading Recovery's evaluation has been challenging, but is ultimately valuable. He said that the evaluation will be in 1,000 schools, which he said is an unprecedented size. He added that the i3 program will add exponentially to the What Works Clearinghouse library.

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Sparks asked Gonzalez if he could talk about what KIPP has been doing about capacity building to ensure that its work is sustainable.

Gonzales said that KIPP is working to continue its outreach outside KIPP beyond the i3 grant.

Griffith said that TFA is developing learning communities through its i3 grant that it hopes to sustain, such as a rural school leaders academy. TFA is also connecting veteran TFA teachers with larger school districts.

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Sparks asked Griffith what the network of i3 grantees looks like.



Griffith said that the network of grantees has created learning communities that allow grantees to share positive and negative experiences and reflect on their own work and development. He said that scaling up has also given TFA the opportunity to try new things, for example, partnering with the University of Washington on a new kind of training institute.

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Sparks asked the panelists if the i3 program provides any lessons for policymakers.

D'Agostino said that the i3 program is demanding more out of school interventions. He added that i3 funding is important, but that i3's concept is priceless – it's transformative and doesn't just dole out money based on need but rather on need and effectiveness.

