

Name of the Organization	University of Virginia Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education (PLE)
Website	http://www.darden.virginia.edu/darden-curry-ple/
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About the Organization	The Partnership for Leaders in Education grows the capacity of districts and schools to lead transformational change through a well-established, successful approach that is the only model of its kind to pair world-class executive leadership development and ongoing, embedded support for administrators and teacher leaders. Through our school turnaround partnerships, we collaborate with district and school leadership to build collective leadership capacity and shift the paradigm in underperforming schools, generating lasting gains in achievement and learning to spread success across the district.
Approach to Designing Transformation Zones	<p>We first partner with districts to create the conditions and framework for change across four areas – leadership, support and accountability, talent management and instructional infrastructure – then help design and support the execution of a strategy that creates rapid, meaningful and lasting improvement. Recognizing the specific needs and challenges of individual districts and the schools within them, our turnaround partnerships provide a collaborative, tailored approach that makes strong use of our partners’ existing resources. Our approach to redesigning conditions in transformation zones is not a one-size-fits-all recipe, instead we work with leaders to create best practices for autonomy to help insulate the zone schools and strategy from disruptive district changes while planning for successful zone practice to inform broader changes.</p> <p>PLE has a depth of experience developing Zone management and support structures building leadership teams, working to ensure strong relationships between the zone team and other district members, and building systems to monitor and make necessary adjustments to zone tactics. PLE provides leadership development and consultation to build internal leadership capacity and help district and school leadership teams create systems of support, aligned to research on most effective conditions for school success, to put school needs first.</p>
Transformation Zone Experience(s)	<p>We’ve worked with five difference zones, here are two examples:</p> <p><i>Caddo Parish (LA)</i> – PLE worked to support hiring a Zone director, principals and enhancement of principal autonomy to select staff, data driven professional development and leadership training and more. Throughout their time there, they helped the zone implement a high-quality curriculum, instruction and assessments. Support led to five schools as top quartile in state gains.</p> <p><i>Shelby County (TN)</i> – PLE supported Shelby County in their efforts to prioritize schools by incentivizing pay and autonomy in hiring effective principals and teachers, extending the school day, and creating a iZone District Support Team for their priority schools. They helped selected principals to lead transformation schools and helped enhance their quality of coaching to school teams.</p>
Additional Information	Our partners have achieved lasting results in a wide variety of settings, with half of our partners achieving double-digit gains in just two years and many of our partnerships achieving more impressive results – leading us to be recognized by RAND as evidenced-based under ESSA.