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TAKING THE LEAD

A MESSAGE FROM MARK



(Click for a message from West40 Exec. Director Dr. Mark Klaisner)

"LEADE" BY EXAMPLE

A West40 partner school district that sought to prioritize student access to high quality teaching and learning is seeing the benefits of more collaborative and creative classrooms, thanks to a West40 team member who knows what it takes to LEADE.

Professional learning specialist Angela Gonzales partnered with Berwyn South School District 100 to create and implement LEADE, a program that empowers educators to transform learning for students through technology integration and innovative instructional practices.

According to Gonzales, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with teachers telling her the program spurs innovation and makes classrooms more student-centered.

"LEADE directly supports the work, mission and vision of Berwyn South School District 100 and in turn allows me to live out the West40 mission of being what our districts need us to be," Gonzales said.

The collaborative cohort of educators at District 100 allows for personalized learning experiences for all students.

"LEADE educators are making a significant difference in the teaching and learning in our classrooms and their influence continues to grow, due to our collaboration with West40," said District 100 superintendent Mary Havis.

LEADE is offered to all eight of the district's school and has had representation from nearly every stakeholder group across the district, including teachers and administrators.



HELPING OUR PARTNERS LEAD

We at West40 feel the best way to lead is through supporting our partner school districts, educators and community members. Whether it's providing tools for professional development, supporting students and their families, partnering with non-profit organizations, helping educators navigate the licensure process, or ensuring buildings meet safety requirements, our partners have provided these examples of their success.

- Kevin Skinkis: Superintendent, Township Dist. 208**

The amount of services and support West40 provides its districts is fantastic. Dr. Klaisner and his staff have created a one-stop shop for professional development for instructional and support staff, alternative programming for students, and resources for families to support their child's educational journey.
- Meghana Menon: Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC)**

The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance program at PHIMC has been lucky to call West40 and Berwyn SD 100 long-standing partners in creating safer school environments for LGBTQ+ students since 2015. Given this history, we are thrilled at the opportunity to make this partnership more official through a joint initiative to pilot our Safe Schools Consortia project - an effort that will provide a comprehensive process model for other districts and ROEs to follow in creating learning spaces where all community members can show up as their full authentic selves. West40's strong relationships with the school community and wealth of knowledge have strengthened the Safe Schools Consortia Project and demonstrate their commitment to equality and inclusivity for all.
- Todd Fitzgerald, Superintendent, Komarek School District 94**

Emilia Herrera and the SEL Hub team at West40 have been a great partner for my district. We have committed to providing professional learning related to SEL for our staff this school year to focus on how we can better support students that are having difficulties. The formation of the REACH team and their completion of the TRS-IA survey has given our school more focus as it relates to areas of need for our building. This information has directly impacted the learning opportunities provided to my staff by the SEL Hub. Thanks to West40 for providing this level of support to us.
- Melina Leber, School Social Worker, Westmoor School, Northbrook District 28**

West40 is able to provide us with the most effective and up-to-date strategies in order to help our students, based on the needs of our country and in our community and they tailor it to our community very much so. There's such a vast amount of relevant and impactful resources and strategies at our disposal that I've never had before.
- Aldo Calderin: Superintendent, Cicero Dist. 99**

We are fortunate to be able to have West40 support our district in the areas of school improvement, professional development and coaching. Most recently, we have been doing classroom walkthroughs with our school administrators, district administrators and West40 personnel. The experience has been impactful for us as administrators and has helped us improve our feedback process to building administrators and teachers.
- Diego Giraldo: Superintendent, Mannheim District 83**

Tapestry is an integral part of our community. In partnership with West40, this program supports many of our students and families. Thank you West40 for your amazing support! Our Tapestry advocates develop long lasting and caring relationships with our families and community. The advocate's support at the Middle and Elementary school setting is amazing!
- Brian Waterman: Superintendent, Lyons Township**

West40 has been an incredible partner over the past two years with everything from their support with ALOP to student advocates in our buildings providing comprehensive support to some of our most at-risk learners to professional learning for our entire district on Social-Emotional Learning. The West40 staff have been responsive and committed to helping us help our students and families.
- Jeanne Keane, Oak Park Elementary SD97-Building and Grounds**

West40, specifically Steve Bogren and Phil Abraham, provided guidance, support, and resources to help our District meet and maintain compliance with all relevant regulations. Through their expertise and ongoing support, the regional office helped our District ensure that we are providing a safe and compliant educational environment for our students and staff.
- Kevin Suchinski: Superintendent, Hillside District 93**

As we navigate the teacher shortage, school districts, including HSD #93, need experts like Sharon Balderas to help navigate the ISBE regulations to ensure that prospective hires have the correct credentials. The entire Licensure Department is always willing to go above and beyond and we cannot thank them enough!
- Pam Jenkins: HR Specialist, River Forest Public Schools**

West40 has been a tremendous help in licensing and fingerprinting. Whenever I have doubts about credentials or need to know what is required to hire a teacher, paraprofessional and recently substitutes, Sharon has been great. Not only does she provide the answer, she always includes resources to assist in furthering my knowledge and show me how to find this information on my own. Plus the monthly meeting Gina and Sharon hosts makes me more confident in my job.

FOR EDUCATORS

HELPFUL NOTABLES

- The West40 SCOTY Awards (Student Citizen of the Year) will be held March 22 at West Leyden High School. Each school can select one student; in the event school has 500+ students they can nominate two. Be on the lookout for more information.
- A Short Term Substitute Training session will be held virtually on March 8 from 12:30-3:00pm. Go to <https://bit.ly/40U4UCk> for more information on this and other West40 training sessions and workshops.
- Listen to the West40 Podcast, "Shift Everything" by clicking <https://anchor.fm/shift-everything>.
- Watch our West40 videos: <https://www.youtube.com/@west40intermediatecenter50/videos>

We love sharing stories of how lives have been changed in partnership with your school or district. Want to join us in inspiring others? [Please send your story our way.](#)