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## **United Schools Network advances student success through continuous improvement**

**Columbus, Ohio** – After a dozen years of instructional and building leadership, USN Chief Learning Officer John A. Dues began considering how to spread USN’s nationally-recognized student achievement results outside the walls of USN’s buildings. By moving beyond educational delivery and organizing the nonprofit network’s best practices into clear, practical elements, could other schools replicate this success?

By using continuous improvement practices -- yes.

Since 2017, Dues and his team have planned and delivered in-depth workshops embedded in USN’s schools, inviting teachers and leaders from around the country to learn and observe what works in high-poverty schools. When the pandemic shut down in-person learning last spring, Dues pivoted.

What if, instead of studying practices honed in the context of our school environment, he could train teacher, school, and district/network leaders in improvement science so they could identify, target, and mitigate barriers to learning in their own specific environments?

Nearly four years after launching its learning and improvement arm, United Schools Network has been awarded two highly-competitive grants from national funders Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Michael & Susan Dell Foundation to advance continuous improvement and data infrastructure work within the network.

Their respective grants of \$250,000 and \$136,720 will allow USN to launch a number of improvement initiatives, including

- an internal Continual Improvement Fellowship program
- a data infrastructure project designed to increase the efficiency of data collection, organization, analysis, visualization, and use of data;
- post-pandemic site visits to organizations successfully using continual improvement methods;
- improvement advisor professional development; and
- the development of a continual improvement handbook.

“I started this organization with the aim of providing outstanding educational opportunities for the 57 students we served in our first year,” reflects USN Founder and CEO Andrew Boy. “Now, at more than 1,000 students, this grant provides space for us to look beyond just educational delivery within our four walls. It allows us, as an education nonprofit, to lock arms with traditional public, public charter, and private schools to accelerate education, to create a step-change for children across the country.”



UNITED SCHOOLS NETWORK

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#### About United Schools Network

USN is a nonprofit charter management organization that began as a single middle school, Columbus Collegiate Academy, in 2008. USN currently serves nearly 1,000 K-8th grade students, 100% of whom are economically disadvantaged, in four schools across Franklinton and the Near East Side. USN is dedicated to transforming lives and our communities through the power of education.

Additional information about USN can be found at <http://www.unitedschoolsnetwork.org>.

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