PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stockton Unified School District partners with nonprofits, Pivot Learning and UnboundEd, to launch new grant-funded curriculum, instruction, and professional learning improvement project

(STOCKTON, CA September 3, 2019) — Stockton Unified School District, with support from partners Pivot Learning, Pivot's subsidiary CORE[1], and UnboundEd, has embarked on an ambitious plan to implement standards-aligned math and English Language Arts (ELA) curricula in every grade and provide every teacher and school leader with high-quality, multi-year professional learning in curriculum implementation and in addressing racial bias in the classroom.

Said Sonjhia Lowery, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services at Stockton, "We are so excited about this partnership with Pivot and UnboundEd. This opportunity directly supports our commitment towards increasing graduation requirements and converting all 7th and 8th grade teachers from multiple subject credentialed to single subject credentialed. We are an organization that is obsessed with adult learning and this project will reap huge rewards with teaching and learning in Stockton."

Nationally, our education system fails to provide Black and Latino students, English Learner (EL) designated students, and students affected by poverty, with access to high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum. In fact, the evidence[2] suggests that a high-quality curriculum can have large positive impacts on student achievement. We know from the "Opportunity Myth" from TNTP[3] and other research that the quality of materials is directly connected to issues of equity — the opportunity in all classrooms to deeply engage with grade-appropriate assignments. Education systems also fail to provide their teachers with the multi-year, job-embedded professional learning that they need to effectively teach their curriculum. As a result, high need student populations experience disproportionate rates of academic failure in math and ELA, limiting their opportunities for college access and success.

Stockton Unified has identified a need to improve student achievement in ELA and math across the entire district as a primary strategy for improving college and career success for their Black and Latino students, EL-designated students, and students affected by poverty. Stockton struggles with low achievement across all subject areas and grade levels — but especially in middle grades mathematics.

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[1] Pivot and CORE are one organization and later referred to as Pivot throughout the press release.
[2] Chingos, Matthew M, and Grover J. Whitehurst. "CHOOSING BLINDLY Instructional Materials, Teacher Effectiveness, and the Common Core." *Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings,* Apr. 2012, pp. 1–27.
[3] "The Opportunity Myth." *TNTP,* https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/.

Stockton saw the following results on the most recently reported California Assessment for Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP):

- 68% of 6th grade, 69% of 7th grade, and 78% of 8th grade Black students did not meet standards.
- 85% of 6th grade, 56% of 7th grade, and 62% of 8th grade Latino students did not meet standards.
- 55% of 6th grade, 56% of 7th grade, and 62% of 8th grade students affected by poverty did not meet standards.

Accelerating mathematics achievement in middle school is critical to high school and post-secondary success. Stockton's UC/CSU eligibility data (the A-G rate) reveals that only 32.3% of Latino students, 22.3% of Black students, 34.1% of students affected by poverty, and 7.6% of EL-designated students complete the necessary coursework to be eligible to apply to a four-year California university.

To improve these outcomes, Stockton Unified has embarked on an ambitious plan. Pivot Learning and UnboundEd have been excited to support Stockton as the district has launched this work over the past six months. In the summer of 2019, Pivot and UnboundEd were thrilled to receive a multi-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to augment this existing partnership with Stockton Unified.

Pivot CEO, Arun Ramanathan, shared, "With support from the Gates Foundation, we are excited to partner with Stockton to build systems and provide targeted, embedded professional learning — to elevate the teaching practice of these professionals and improve student achievement."

"Stockton is ready for the challenge," UnboundEd CEO Lacey Robinson said. "They have demonstrated a strong desire to learn and refine the skills necessary to help students read and process at grade level and beyond. We are proud to support their learning."

About Stockton Unified School District

Our Theory of Instruction is how we believe the art of teaching and learning develops our students. In short, we will act upon a belief that high-quality, rigorous, FIRST instruction is key to our success; Instruction that is all the following:

- Based in strong and public standards.
- Infuses the skills and techniques for language learners for all as first instruction and not remediation.
- Is culturally relevant and engaging.
- Invites all learners into the act of learning through grade level text and computation as a baseline and not a guideline.
- Starts with rigorous grade level text and computation and scaffolds to success when necessary.

Stockton Unified's mission is to graduate every student college, career, and community ready. In doing so we lift all youth out of circumstances of poverty and scarcity.

About Pivot Learning

Founded in 1995, Pivot Learning is a nonprofit organization of K-12 education experts who work directly with districts to address their biggest challenges, including raising student achievement and closing unconscionably large achievement gaps. We partner with education leaders to provide the knowledge, skills and support proven to strengthen educational systems and transform teaching and learning. In 2017, Pivot Learning acquired our subsidiary, CORE. For the last 25 years, CORE has worked as a trusted advisor to schools across the country. CORE's customized, multi-year professional learning programs provide the knowledge and skills educators need to implement effective, evidence-based curriculum and instructional practices in literacy and math that result in sustainable academic excellence. Learn more at www.pivotlearning.org.

About UnboundEd

Founded in April 2015, UnboundEd led the development of EngageNY, one of the country's most widely-used and highly-rated (by EdReports) K-12 Open Educational Resources in ELA and math. To date, EngageNY has been downloaded nearly 40 million times and used by educators in all 50 states. Established to preserve EngageNY and extend its use by digitizing and adapting it to support struggling students, UnboundEd provides standards-aligned instructional resources and immersive equity-focused training for thousands of educators from across the nation through its week-long Standards Institute. Held twice a year, the Standards Institute engages participants in best practices in curriculum implementation and educational equity that can be applied to a broad range of instructional materials. Learn more at www.unbounded.org.