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New Collaborative Report Brings Together Critical Elements of Successful Schools

A compendium of research and best practices from organizations representing 10 million educators, parents, and policymakers will help build strong, thriving public schools

Alexandria, Va. (January 23, 2018) – Educators know what works in successful public schools. For the first time, a dozen major education organizations have pulled together their best practices and research to state these elements and help policymakers, school leaders, and the public understand why some schools succeed and how they do it.

[*The Elements of Success: 10 Million Speak on Schools That Work*](#) is a project from the Learning First Alliance, a coalition of 12 national education groups representing more than 10 million parents, teachers, administrators, specialists, and school boards. LFA will host a panel discussion with leaders from the American Federation of Teachers, National School Boards Association, Learning Forward, and American School Counselor Association on these elements on January 23, 2018.

Successful schools are fulfilling what many consider the purpose of education: developing young people's knowledge, skills, and attitudes so that they graduate from high school ready for college, career, and citizenship. The compendium identifies six elements common to all successful schools, including:

- **Focus on the Total Child:** Supporting each child's needs, inside and outside the classroom, to help them become an effective, empowered learner.
- **Commitment to Equity and Access:** Ensuring the needs of all student populations are met.
- **Family and Community Engagement:** Effectively engaging families and communities in support of students.
- **Distributed Leadership:** Defining leadership broadly and sharing decision making.
- **Strong, Supported Teaching Force and Staff:** Staffing schools with educators who are well-educated, well-prepared, and well-supported, and providing continuous learning opportunities to them.

- **Relationship-Oriented School Climate:** Creating a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility among staff and students and with families and communities. These schools are safe, welcoming, and respectful to all.

“We see public schools that are working well, where educators, parents, and local communities have developed programs to meet their specific goals and challenges,” said LFA chair JoAnn Bartoletti, executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. “The Learning First Alliance wants to share this knowledge so that educators, policymakers, and parents can understand what it takes to build a successful school.”

LFA Executive Director Richard M. Long emphasized that the elements are not interchangeable nor “pick as you please.”

“These elements are like the atoms that make up a molecule,” Long said. “However, we recognize the distinct differences between each school and each community, and schools implement and integrate these elements in vastly different ways depending on context and their individual needs.”

As a continuation of the project, LFA will host a series of in-depth discussions in 2018 to further examine these critical elements with the communities that are impacting local education decision making to align not only the goals but the processes of improving outcomes. LFA also has been working with partners from the business community for the past year to identify common interests and has facilitated conversations and projects among the participants.

Access the compendium at <http://www.learningfirst.org/elementsofsuccess>.

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About the Learning First Alliance

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of leading education organizations with more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Alliance members include: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; AASA, The School Superintendents Association; American Federation of Teachers; American School Counselor Association; Consortium for School Networking; Learning Forward; National Association of Elementary School Principals; National Association of Secondary School Principals; National Education Association; National PTA; National School Boards Association; and National School Public Relations Association.

To learn more about LFA, visit <http://www.learningfirst.org/>.