



Year in Review 2017-18

A Year of Strong Foundations and New Horizons

*WeThinkBig took big steps in its third and final year, laying a strong foundation for continued education innovation and community partnerships. Recognizing the needs of educators, interests of learners, and the availability of valuable learning resources throughout the community, WTB introduced a new collaboration initiative -- **LRNG:Badgerland** – to engage and unite students and stakeholders in exploring deeper ways of learning together.*

LRNG:Badgerland builds on WTB’s success in the education community and provides the 21st century infrastructure to advance student achievement, support innovation and strengthen educational partnerships, creating a bright horizon for education in Wisconsin.

SHOWCASE: Thinking Big about Creating “Cities of Learning”

Education Partners Work Together	To Create Student Badges	...that Unlock Opportunities for Success
+ + =		Healthcare Careers Exploration Badge Earns: Invitation to Job Shadow with UW Health Staff; HOPE s.w.a.g. gifts
+ + =		Careers in Construction Badge Earns: Chance to Shadow on Job Site; Home Improvement Gift Cards; Tools & Work Equipment
+ + =		Work-Place Ready Badge Earns: Summer Job following Course; Gift Cards; Movie Passes & Work-Items
+ + =		Digital Learning Ready Earns: Progress towards Micro-credential & Advancement; Regional Recognition

WeThinkBig provides the catalyst for partnerships and the wrap-around services to connect schools with employers and resources to support student success.

Last year’s “Next Big Idea: Cities of LRNG” proved pivotal for WeThinkBig and paved the way for its work and transition over the 2017-2018 program year.

In late 2017 WTB was invited to spearhead and serve as backbone organization for the nationally-acclaimed LRNG initiative in Wisconsin. WTB created **LRNG:Badgerland** as a framework to support collaboration among Wisconsin schools, employers and community experts. Through the initiative, stakeholders collaborate to develop integrated academic and community-based learning activities, and work together to recognize student competencies with micro-credentials and advancement opportunities.



In early 2018 WTB launched a pilot study with select partners. The 6-month pilot project engaged five diverse educational organizations and stakeholders to explore how LRNG might address current resource challenges, support innovation and improve educational impact. The results were encouraging.

Recognizing its potential as a powerful tool for all Wisconsin educators, employers and learners, WI-DPI has stepped up and generously agreed to take the reins for hosting the LRNG:Badgerland Network for Wisconsin.



WTB HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2017-18

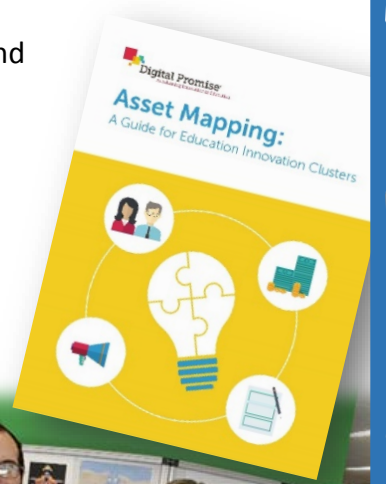


#1) INSPIRING INNOVATION – Spearheaded efforts to engage educators and community in fresh ways of thinking about education success.

- Spearheaded and brought the **Cities of LRNG initiative** to Wisconsin. Created **LRNG:Badgerland** and launched successful pilot project with regional education organizations and employers.

- Chosen by **Digital Promise** as one of a select group of communities across the country to inventory how social network assets can support education innovation. Results were presented at the Digital Promise EdCluster Annual Convening in Philadelphia.

- Led team of education leaders on **National Writing Project/You Media**-sponsored site visits to meet and share insights with successful education innovation communities in the Midwest.



#2) EMPOWERING EDUCATORS – Created unique professional development opportunities and resources for educators.

- Convened and co-hosted the **Teaching & Learning Leaders Circle** with **EdSurge** to support edtech leaders in schools.
- Facilitated the Happy Innovators Workshop at **Wisconsin Public Television’s “Education Innovation Summit”**. The two-day invitation-only event attracted leaders statewide.

- Co-hosted the **Tech Education Alliance** initiative to foster regional collaboration.



- Launched the **WeThinkBig Blog** and **Online Teacher Resource Center**, with free resources to over 600 monthly readers.



#3) ENGAGING COMMUNITY – Continued conversations with educators, students and key stakeholders in the region.

- Sponsored **TeachersNet** and **Madison Education Group** communities.
- Participated in DPI’s **Pathways WI Inaugural Summit**, working with state education and workforce agencies, employers and education leaders on best practices and opportunities for working together.

WTB has been dedicated to improving educational experiences for K-12 students by providing educators the inspiration, tools & partnerships they need to advance educational innovation in Wisconsin.