

**Education Innovation and Research Program (EIR)
Project Abstract**

Applicant Name: University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (Penn GSE)

Project Title: Helping Educator Resilience & Optimism: Workforce Strategy for Wellbeing & Retention [Project HERO]

Type of Grant Requested: (select one) Early-Phase Mid-Phase Expansion

Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

- Absolute Priority 1-- Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)
- Absolute Priority 2-- Field-Initiated Innovations—General
- Absolute Priority 3-- Promoting STEM Education
- Absolute Priority 4-- Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs
- Absolute Priority 5-- Educator Recruitment and Retention

Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses: (select all that apply)

- Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners
- Competitive Preference Priority 2— Addressing the Impact of COVID–19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty

Total number of students to be served by the project: 32,200 students

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: K-12 grades

Definition of high-need students: Project HERO will serve low income and/or students of color.

Brief description of project activities: Project HERO seeks to innovate workforce strategy in schools through a balance of digital tools and professional development to enable school leaders to (a) develop workforce data literacy in relation to teacher wellbeing, resilience, and retention; (b) build knowledge of data-driven workforce planning; and (c) engage in the design, implementation, and monitoring of longitudinal workforce strategy.

Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes: The objectives of Project HERO are to: Identify and train school leaders on best practices in workforce data literacy, workforce development, and management practice (Objective 1); Support school leaders to develop and implement data-informed workforce strategy (Objective 2); and to improve staff (including teachers) and student experience and retention in PeopleBench Schools (Objective 3).

Summary of how the project is innovative: Project HERO will implement and evaluate an entrepreneurial accessible, readily scalable, and research-informed approach to workforce strategy. The suite of customizable digital interventions – designed by PeopleBench – support workforce strategy through providing leaders with a platform that allows them to consolidate and visualize workforce data, select salient workforce priorities and implement responsive longitudinal action to support staff resilience and retention.

Other studies related to the proposed project: (1) What Works Clearinghouse, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2020, March). Balanced Leadership®. Retrieved from <https://whatworks.ed.gov>;

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(2) Shell, D. L., Hurt, C. S., & White, H. (2023, May 31). Principal characteristics' effect on teacher retention: A systematic review. *Educational Research and Reviews*.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?q=Principals%2Bteacher%2Bretention&id=EJ1392593>; (3) Van der Vyver, C. P., Kok, T., & Conley, L. (2020, December 1). The relationship between teachers' professional wellbeing and principals' leadership behaviour to improve teacher retention.

<https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38.i2.07>; (4) Van der Vyver, C. P., Kok, T., & Conley, L. (2020, December 1). The relationship between teachers' professional wellbeing and principals' leadership behaviour to improve teacher retention. <https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38.i2.07>

Proposed implementation sites: The randomized control trial will involve treatment schools in several districts in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania that have provided letters of support. These include: Upper Moreland School District; Chester-Upland School District; Butler Area School District; Wissahickon Ridley School District; School District of Philadelphia; Chester County Intermediate Unit; Colonial School District

Organizations partnering with this project: PeopleBench and Quantily