



2023 Year-End Review

A Summary of What We've Learned

**with Highlights from
Our Journey (2014-2023) and
Our Bold New Direction**

BUCK INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION

PBLworks



Project Based Learning for all.

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Message from the CEO

Dear PBLWorks Supporters and Partners,

Thanks to our PBLWorks team, our many partners, and the educators we serve, 2023 was our best year yet! It's been nearly a decade since I took the helm at PBLWorks in 2015. This year was momentous as we completed strategic planning and set a bold new direction forward that keeps pace with dynamic changes in K-12 education and the world.

In this report, we'll share some big accomplishments from 2023, our progress and key accomplishments since 2019, and our plan to significantly expand our reach and deepen our impact for the next five years so that many more students, especially Black and Brown students, can experience PBL and achieve success in college, career, and life.

As we begin 2024, I am feeling very optimistic about our collective effort to continue our world-class professional services, to revise and devise new services to meet the needs to teachers and leaders in the field, to develop powerful PBL units for teachers to facilitate, and to create new digital tools/app(s) to support teachers and leaders.



We have an important and ambitious vision for ALL students — especially Black and Brown students — experience Gold Standard Project Based Learning. I know we will move closer to our vision in 2024 and beyond, thanks to the outstanding work of our board, staff, and partners.

Onward with love and purpose,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Lenz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Lenz
Chief Executive Officer, PBLWorks

About PBLWorks

Mission

At PBLWorks, we build the capacity of teachers to design and facilitate quality Project Based Learning and the capacity of school and system leaders to set the conditions for teachers to implement great projects with all students.

Vision

At PBLWorks, our vision is for all students, especially Black and Brown students, to engage in high quality Project Based Learning to deepen their learning and achieve success in college, career, and life.

Core Values

Racial Equity

We are committed to advancing racial equity, so...

- We identify and work to dismantle racial inequities in all facets of our work.
- We foster inclusivity to honor our diverse community.
- We apply what we learn about racial equity so that we model the changes we seek in school systems, schools, and classrooms.



Learning

We are learners. Consequently:

- We are courageous, innovative, and take calculated risks in achieving our mission.
- We are reflective and persistent in our learning.
- We consider failure as an opportunity to learn and grow.

Quality

We are committed to working at the highest possible standard in service of our internal and external partners and to the field of education.

Integrity

We are honest and adhere to our vision, beliefs, and mission-driven principles in all of our endeavors.

Consequently:

- We have direct and productive conversations with our colleagues in BIE and with our partners.
- We make and keep agreements and demonstrate our respect for our colleagues and partners.
- We hold ourselves accountable for delivering on our commitments.

Collaboration

We believe collaboration creates synergy, efficiency, and richer solutions. Consequently:

- We work in teams as needed.
- We consider the consequences of our decision for others.

Core Beliefs

Since 1999, we have offered professional development in Project Based Learning (PBL) to teachers and leaders at the school and district level. Our core beliefs about high quality PBL are based on our collective experience seeing what is possible for all students, including Black and Brown students. When done well, PBL...

- Transforms students by inspiring them to think differently about themselves as learners, collaborators, and leaders
- Prepares students for success in college, career, and life
- Leads students to master core academic content and builds success skills
- Advances educational equity and empowers youth furthest from opportunity
- Enables teachers to make a difference in their students' lives

Racial Equity Imperative

We are focused on advancing racial equity through high quality PBL because it enables all students, especially Black and Brown students,¹ to gain the academic content knowledge and understanding, the success skills, and the sense of agency that will help them in college, career, and life. Given systemic and institutionalized racism and the oppression of Black and Brown students in the educational system, we strive individually and collectively to ensure that Black and Brown students experience Gold Standard Project Based Learning at least twice a year in their school. Our focus on advancing racial equity for Black and Brown students does not preclude us from addressing any and all other issues of inequity and oppression for any other people



and working for all students to experience Gold Standard PBL. Furthermore, we work towards all students experiencing Gold Standard PBL—excluding no one.

As part of our commitment to advancing racial equity, the staff and board continue to sharpen our focus on:

- Building the capacity of our staff facilitators, including National Faculty, to effectively and productively address and interrupt implicit and explicit bias, racism, white privilege, and other barriers to advancing racial equity as it surfaces in our training with system, district, and school leaders and teachers.
- Creating workshop materials and PBL resources that will explicitly address how PBL is a vehicle to advance our racial equity vision and we will contextualize the relationship between racial equity and PBL in all our resources and materials.
- Purposeful collaboration with district and school partners that serve the national average or more of students furthest from opportunity, especially Black and Brown students.
- Learning as much as we can about racial equity, practicing skills to interrupt racial inequity, and setting and implementing organizational policies in a racially equitable way, so that we model in our organization the changes we seek in school systems, schools, and classrooms.

¹Our use of the terms “Black and Brown” is meant to include students with heritage or familial association from the African diaspora, First Nations, Latinx, Southeast Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders, Middle Eastern, and many others.

2023 Year-End Review

Reach in 2023

We work to increase our impact on

Black and Brown students

by reaching teachers and districts who support them.

43,152 educators from more than **257** schools, districts, and educational agencies across the globe engaged in online and in-person professional learning.



Quality in 2023

PBLWorks has a legacy of

consistent high-quality professional **learning experiences.**

97% of workshop participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were **"very satisfied"** with the experience.



57

Overall Excellent Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 57 for 1,159 workshops.



Impact in 2023

We measure our impact through

implementation of projects

by teachers in our district partner sites.

75% of districts engaged in district partner services **serve 50% of more Black and Brown students across 16 districts in 11 states.**



51% of teachers who engaged in our flagship workshop, PBL 101, **serve 50% or more Black and Brown students.**



903 individual educators engaged in 31 Open Online Workshops, including PBL 101, Coaching, Leadership, and SEL in PBL. This Business to Consumer (B2C) approach, launched in 2021, offers equitable access to PBL workshops for individual teachers.

72% of teachers who participated in our district services and who served 50% or more Black and Brown students **implemented at least one project.**

2023 Spotlights

PBL Curriculum

We accelerated the development of our PBL curriculum in 2023. With generous support from the Kentucky Department of Education, the Bezos Family Foundation, the One8 Foundation, the Overdeck Family Foundation, and XQ Institute, we were able to launch and continue to expand our development scope and expand our development team in 2023.

As part of PBLWorks Strategic Plan 2020–2023, we broadened our strategic direction to include the development of supplemental Open Educational Resource (OER) Gold Standard PBL units with embedded performance assessments in core content areas. This is based on extensive research at the time that revealed a significant opportunity to increase our impact and grow our place in the market and advance racial equity through PBL curricula. Key market insights that drove the strategy included an overall curriculum market estimated at \$6B and a growing demand for Open Education Resources (OER) and supplemental PBL curricula. This was coupled with results from rigorous research showing that high quality instructional materials (HQIM) coupled with professional learning has a positive impact on student outcomes. Evidence

collected internally and through external research about our professional learning affirmed our ability to build the capacity of teachers and school leaders to implement PBL; however, we found no evidence of improved student outcomes beyond self-reporting.

In 2022, we launched PBLNow, a department focused on building *PBL curricula*. Since that time, the team has developed two supplemental OER PBL units per grade level for K–12 in science, 4–12 in social studies, 6–8 in mathematics, and is currently launching 6–9 in English language arts. As part of our strategy for scaling PBL to all students, especially Black and Brown students, we are creating two PBL units for each grade level, based on an assumption that students completing K–12 in a given district will experience a total of 26 PBL units in total. This will help overcome common



systemic structural challenges (e.g., master scheduling, common planning time, collaboration time) that preclude teachers from using high quality PBL as core pedagogy for all students.

Already, we have made great progress refining our professional services to include our PBL curriculum units. At PBL World 2023, our annual conference, we facilitated our first curriculum-based professional learning workshops featuring our newly created PBL science units with 44 middle school teachers.

Participating teachers rated the workshops as *Outstanding* with a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 73.

We are also in the process of designing and testing short, self-paced professional learning that are embedded within the PBL units. Examples include tutorials, tips, short instructional videos, project testimonials, project success stories, strategy guides, and Q&A forums. All of these instructional resources are intended to give teachers the just-in-time support they need to implement PBL well in their classrooms.



PBL World 2023

In 2023, we hosted our 12th Annual PBL World in person for more than 1,500 educators from across the globe.

PBL World is a one-of-a-kind, four-day gathering of K–12 teachers, instructional coaches, and school and district leaders focused on advancing their work with Project Based Learning. Interest in PBL World continues to grow, and in 2023, we sold out and received high praise from participants and positive results:

Overall Excellent Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 67.

87% of PBLWorld participants reported their overall event experience as **very good or excellent**.

100 Net Promoter Score (NPS) rating by district leadership teams engaged in Partner Summit.

The **top three reasons** participants say they attend PBL World:

1

To upgrade their PBL Skills

2

To engage in in-person professional learning

3

To network with other educators in the PBL community

"Incredibly eye opening to newer and better BEST PRACTICES for teaching and learning for future world lifelong learners!"

"Best conference I have ever attended in my 12+ years as a teacher!"

"The vibe was positive and refreshing, and overall, it was an absolutely outstanding professional development!"

2023 PBL Champions

The recipients of the PBL Champion awards are given to everyday leaders in Project Based Learning (PBL) who demonstrate a commitment to PBL; have done quality, lasting work; and have shown evidence of impact on students. They are *champions* of Project Based Learning in their schools, districts, and in the education community. In 2023, we were thrilled to see so many great nominations showcasing high quality PBL in action in classrooms, schools, districts, and states across the country.

Cyndi Rothdeutsch, (pictured at the right, in blue) principal of Kamali'i Elementary School in **Maui, Hawaii**, was awarded with the **Individual PBL Champion Award**, acknowledging her commitment to transforming learning for all students using Gold Standard PBL. In 2017, during her first year as principal, she had the opportunity to participate in PBLWorks professional learning. In 2020, Rothdeutsch was part of the Hawaii Innovative Leadership Network (HILN), supported by Harold K. L. Castle Foundation. She has been an advocate and voice for PBL in her school, community, state, and beyond. In order to make sure that racial and cultural equity is a priority, she provided time



and space for place-based PBL units to be designed alongside Kupuna (i.e., “elders” in Hawaiian), as well as units that explore and honor the Hawaiian land that their school is built on. She shares her commitment to PBL publicly in the school’s academic plan and with all families and students with the goal of 100% of the 403 Kamali’i students experiencing at least two high-quality projects a year.

Mary M. Walsh Elementary School, an urban school in **Springfield, Massachusetts**, received the **School PBL Champion Award**. The school serves 267 students in grades PreK–5, including nearly 90% Black and Brown students. After beginning their PBL journey in 2019, Principal Vinnie Regan joined the Massachusetts School Leader Network. Since 2020, under Regan’s leadership, students in his school have engaged in more than 60 projects. PBL has complemented their efforts to support the development of success skills and to promote



engagement through student identity, voice, choice, and the ability to define and solve authentic problems in new and novel ways. PBL at Mary M. Walsh is truly “main course.” There is a designated block for PBL, and almost 100% of teachers have completed the PBL 101 and 201 (Equity) workshops. Every student at Mary Walsh completed at least three high quality PBL experiences during the 2022–2023 school year. All students participated in a showcase event for each project and in two public showcase events to present what they are most proud of from their PBL work this year to families and community members.

Clark County School District in *Las Vegas, Nevada*, the fifth largest school district in the nation, serving more than 300,000 students in 370 schools, received the **District PBL Champion Award**. Despite the many challenges faced in many districts today, two cohorts of district leaders are working creatively and collaboratively to tackle challenges head-on. Leaders have made high quality PBL experiences a core priority for students on their campuses by finding creative ways to establish regularly scheduled blocks of time for teachers to observe other classrooms, plan projects, and reflect. They routinely survey students about their experiences during projects and then reflect on the results to make changes for the next projects. This dedication to building a culture of PBL means that students engage in higher-quality project opportunities. In classes involving PBL, students are more engaged in their learning and solving problems and challenges that enable change in their communities. Teachers are embracing a more learner-centered approach throughout K–12, and learners are reaping the benefits of engaging in rich inquiry-driven experiences.

Dr. Jason E. Glass, former education commissioner of the *State of Kentucky*, was awarded the first-ever **State PBL Champion Award**. After starting off as a teacher in Kentucky, Jason spent time in various leadership roles in Iowa, Ohio, and Colorado. He went back to his home state and brought Deeper Learning to all as part of the Kentucky Department of Education's *United We Learn* initiative. As commissioner, he led the charge to bring to life a vision that inspires all students to become lead learners. This vision, created by Kentuckians for Kentuckians, called for vibrant and engaging learning experiences for every student, innovation in schools, and collaboration with our communities. Under his leadership, the KDE in partnership with PBLWorks launched a statewide PBL ecosystem focused on increasing the use of high quality Gold Standard PBL in K–12 schools throughout the State.

State PBL Ecosystems

KENTUCKY—Going Big

In the fall of 2021, PBLWorks launched a statewide PBL initiative in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) focused on creating a PBL Ecosystem to scale Gold Standard Project Based Learning across the State with the goal of reaching at least 492 of the State's 1,477 public schools. This translates to approximately 216,000 more students gaining access to PBL!

The PBL Ecosystem in Kentucky is designed to support the State's *United We Learn* initiative. Jason E. Glass, former education commissioner, said:

Kentuckians are “calling for bold changes to education in our state around giving our students the kinds of learning experiences that prepare them for an automated, lightning-fast, globally interconnected economy...Our

best way of going about that is to change the kinds of experiences our students have in classrooms — making those experiences hands-on, authentic, meaningful and connected to the kinds of work they will need to do outside of school...”

To that end, PBLWorks has been focused on bringing PBL to as many students as possible in three years. The PBL Ecosystem in Kentucky is designed for broad reach and includes: statewide School Leader and District Leader Networks; regional services supported by Education Cooperatives, including Project Slices, School Leadership Networks, and Regional PBL Conferences; and district partner services.



Highlights 2021-2023

Since 2021, we have engaged educators in 68% (82) of Kentucky's 120 counties in PBLWorks professional learning! Check out the map on the previous page. This includes a total of 385 professional learning experiences since the inception of the partnership in the 2021–2022 school year. In total, to date, 2,174 educators across the State of Kentucky have engaged in PBLWorks professional learning. This includes:

- **503 educators** engaged in **18 Project Slices**
- **478 teachers** engaged in **20 PBL 101s**
- **450 educators** engaged in eight **Regional PBL Conferences** offered by all of the Educational Cooperatives with a **63 average Excellent Net Promoter Score (NPS)**
- **395 educators** engaged in District Partner Services from two districts
- **297 school leaders** engaged in **17 School Leadership Networks**
- **51 district leaders** engaged in the **District Leadership Network**, representing 22 districts

Read more about our work in Kentucky in our [2023 Report](#) and [Executive Summary](#).





Massachusetts School Leader Network

MASSACHUSETTS – Going Deep

Since 2021, PBLWorks has been developing a PBL Ecosystem in the State of Massachusetts. Over the last three years, we have engaged two cohorts of schools in School Leader Networks, one district in district partner services, and other educators in schools and districts across the State.

The PBL Ecosystem in Massachusetts is designed to go deeper with an infusion of resources to provide greater support for fewer schools and districts with

an intention of showing evidence of the impact of PBL on student outcomes with the support of the One8 Foundation. Briefly, the design includes three unique features: School Leadership Networks with extended professional learning for school leadership teams coupled with professional learning for teachers, a robust data collection plan, and a business development strategy to grow PBL statewide.

Mary Walsh Elementary School Principal and 2023 PBL School Champion Vinnie Regan shares his reflections on PBL:

“PBL is our way to make great things happen for kids. The MA SLN has been transformative in how we continue to develop the capacity of our teachers for Gold Standard PBL. The support for the leadership team has been excellent.”

Highlights 2021-2023

Since 2021, we have engaged over 1,700 educators in PBLWorks professional learning. This includes 18 schools engaged in School Leader Networks, one district partner, and 23 schools and districts engaged in other professional services. This included:

- **1,384 teachers** engaged in PBL 101
- **134 school and district leaders** engaged in professional learning
- **30 districts** in total engaged in professional learning
- **73 educators** engaged in District Partner Services from one district
 - **88% of the students** in the partner district are **50% or more Black and Brown students**
- **18 schools** engaged in two cohorts of School Leader Networks
 - **30% of the 10 schools** in Cohort 1 serve **50% or more Black and Brown students**
 - **63% of the 8 schools** in Cohort 2 serve **50% or more Black and Brown students**
 - **61% of teachers** in the Cohort 1 and 2 schools engaged in PBL 101

Two Cohort 2 Schools met 80% and 90% of the 2022–2023 State Accountability targets

- **6,800 students** in Cohort 2 of the School Leadership Network engaged in at least two projects in the 2022–2023 School Year
 - **68%** of total students
 - **75% of Black and Brown students**
 - **75% of students** eligible for free and reduced price lunch
 - **75% of students** eligible for special services
 - **70% of students** learning English as a second language



MA STEM Week 2023

Each year, we participate in MA STEM Week. In 2023, 100 teachers engaged in professional learning focused on *The Future of Work* project. Over 500 students and 100 industry professionals engaged in the Project, answering the Driving Question:

How can we prepare and inspire members of our school community to pursue impactful STEM careers?

Students shared their learning at a culminating STEM Week Challenge Showcase along with other students across the State, as shown at the left.

Check out *The Future of Work* project [here](#).

HAWAI'I – Going the Distance

The Hawaii Innovative Leader Network (HILN) was our first PBLWorks statewide initiative. The focus of HILN has been to create a network of school leaders from schools across the Islands who have the capacity to lead schoolwide implementation of PBL. In 2016, PBLWorks engaged a small group of local school leaders to design the Network. In 2018, we partnered with an external research team to engage in a formative evaluation of HILN, which informed the iterative design. Since 2017, we have engaged six cohorts of school leaders in professional services designed to build their capacity to create the conditions for high quality PBL in their schools with generous support from the Harold K. L. Castle Foundation.

Kamali'i Elementary School Principal and 2023 PBL Individual Champion Cyndi Rothdeutsch made PBL the focus of her school. Prioritizing racial and cultural equity, she provides time and space for place-based PBL units to be designed alongside Kupuna (i.e., “elders” in Hawaiian), as well as those that explore and honor the Hawaiian land where their school resides. Rothdeutsch has committed to 100% of students experiencing at least two high-quality projects a year for every grade level and proficiency level. She has built accountability and support around that vision, and the commitment to PBL is called out in the school's academic plan and shared during family nights with all families and students.



Highlights 2017-2023

- **94 school leaders** engaged in HILN from all islands (See map above.)
- **71 public, charter, and independent schools** participated in HILN
- **87% of the Complex Areas** were represented in HILN
- **100% of Hawaiian islands** were represented in HILN
- **23% of Hawaii's 168,634 students** were collectively reached through HILN

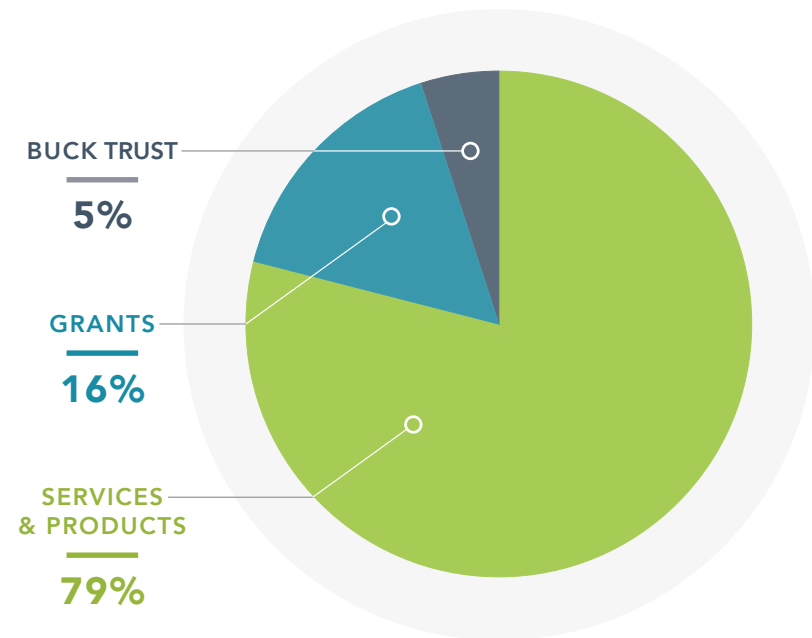
2023 Team & Financials

Our Team

In 2023, the PBLWorks team grew to 52 full-time and 70 part-time staff members. Our professional services and facilitation teams include experienced teachers, school leaders, and district leaders with deep experience using PBL as a transformative practice to transform the lives of all students. As part of our commitment to advancing racial equity, we have continued to focus on recruiting and retaining a diverse staff of employees, using anti-biased hiring practices and equity-centered strategies. In 2023, our full-time staff consisted of 52% people of color (POC), up from 47% in 2022. Our National Faculty are our part-time staff who facilitate professional services. In 2023, 36% of our National Faculty are POC, consistent with 2022.

Financials

PBLWorks is a 501c3 with a sustainable financial model that is supported by, and not dependent upon, philanthropy. In 2023, 84% of our revenue was from fees for services and products.



2014–2023: Highlights from Our Journey

Reach, Quality, Impact

Since 2014, we have experienced success and growth, including successfully navigating the negative impacts of COVID-19. Our **reach** has extended to over 200,000 educators who have engaged in professional learning. Educators have consistently rated our professional learning as high **quality** with annual overall Net Promoter Scores ranging from *Excellent* to *Outstanding*. This included partnering with 51 districts in 22 states to scale PBL across their schools since 2017. Of these districts, 76% serve 50% or more Black and Brown students. In 2023, we launched a new data collection strategy to capture a valid snapshot of our **impact**, using project implementation in districts as the metric. These baseline data show that 72% of teachers serving 50% or more Black and Brown students in district partner schools implemented at least one project.

Growth & Stability

Since 2014, we have experienced significant financial **growth**. In 2023, we ended the year with \$18.9M in revenue, which is an increase of \$11.7M from 2014

(\$7.2M). We have seen similar growth in our net assets, creating greater **stability**. We ended 2023 with \$11.3M in net assets, which is an increase of \$7.5M over 2014 (\$3.8M).

Organizational Capacity

The PBLWorks team has grown significantly since 2014 with an increase of 27 full-time staff (from 25 in 2014 to 52 in 2023). Our part-time facilitator team of National Faculty grew by 40 staff members (from 30 in 2014 to 70 in 2023). This includes an increase in our staff diversity with 23% more full-time staff of color and 3% more part-time staff of color since 2014. In addition to creating a more diverse team who reflects the classrooms, schools, and districts where we want to focus our impact, we've also strategically built our organization to support significant growth and scaling, including these key highlights:

- Since 2017, we've built a strong capacity for **research and evidence** with widespread internal use of evidence to services and products and the creation of rubrics, frameworks, and briefs to support educators' use of evidence. In 2022,

we had a huge “win” when the results of the Knowledge in Action study, for which PBLWorks designed and facilitated professional learning, found that students, including students furthest from opportunity, in AP PBL courses outperformed peers in traditional AP courses.

- Our **marketing** is strong with outreach to nearly 300,000 educators across the country and world. In 2017, we hired a marketing team who set a foundation for our work today with a new trade name (PBLWorks), new branding, and new systems to support increased marketing.

- We’ve significantly increased our **sales** capacity. Today, we have a robust sales team of five, including a newly added senior director of business development who came aboard in 2022 to lead our first-ever outbound sales strategy. Since then, we have established sales targets and KPIs, created more efficient processes, and trained the inbound sales team.
- In 2021, we created a new **curriculum** department focused on developing supplemental Open Educational Resource (OER) PBL units. Today that team of seven is focused on creating units in social studies, science, mathematics, and English language arts.



- In 2023, we created a new **products** department with a chief product and technology officer and head of engineering along with external technical experts to build apps to scale Gold Standard PBL.
- In 2024, we are hiring a chief operating officer who has the knowledge and experience to scale products and services and build the capacity of the **operations** team.



Advancing Racial Equity

Our organization has been on a multi-year journey to support more equitable outcomes for Black and Brown students and to ensure that race is not a predictor of success in schools. Our progress includes:

2023: Added Advancing Racial Equity as a Core Value; increased diversity with 30% increase in full-time staff of color with 52% in 2023.

2021: We began using a **Multicultural Organizational Development** model as a framework to create more diversity within our organization.

2020: We started tracking staff demographics by gender and race/ethnicity.

2019: We developed the **4 Equity Levers for PBL**, aiming to help educators increase the relevance of projects, design in partnership with their specific communities, and share power with their students. As an organization, our lens focuses more on equity than ever before.

2018: We adopted our organizational goals, Equity, Impact, and Growth, annually tracking our reach to and impact on partners serving 50% or more Black and Brown students.

2017: We adopted our **Racial Equity Imperative**, helping us make commitments to equity for Black and Brown students across all facets of our work.

2016: We included racial equity as a key priority in the 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan.

2024 & Beyond: A Bold New Vision

The strength of our brand and our success was confirmed by comprehensive market research in 2023. PBLWorks is the market leader for in-person PBL professional learning. Yet, the markets for PBL and professional learning have changed significantly with a flat-lined professional learning market, rapid growth in online professional services, and curriculum far outpacing professional learning. In sum, market research shows that teachers and leaders want PBL curriculum units, including short units; short, self-paced professional learning experiences; subscription-based options; and lower cost options.

Our Strategic Plan 2024–2028 expands our focus to include continued growth and redesign of in-person and online PBL professional learning services to support teachers to adapt and implement PBL units, including digital professional learning that teachers can access anywhere and anytime, and the creation of an annual subscription-based digital solution to support PBL units,

professional learning, performance assessment, implementation, and analytics. Our digital solution includes high-quality performance assessment results that teachers and leaders can easily access to measure academic and success skill attainment through projects with interoperability that enables connections with existing Learning Management Systems (LMSs) and Student Information Systems

By 2028, we envision a PBLWorks that has a significantly expanded K–12 market share with advanced racial equity, reaching over 230,000 educators annually, especially those serving 50% or more Black and Brown students, through refined and new products and services that offer educators easy access to Gold Standard PBL anywhere, anytime.

(SISs). This bold new direction will meet the evolving needs of educators now and in the future through expanded professional service offerings that include:

- **Accelerated development of PBL units** in all content areas and grade levels that teachers can adapt for their students and unique contexts
- **Revised professional learning** to meet the evolving needs of teachers and leaders today and tomorrow
- **New digital tools/apps** that support educators anywhere, anytime as they learn and implement PBL



Accelerated PBL Curriculum Development

We are thrilled to see the most recent market research affirms our 2020 strategy to expand PBL products and service offerings to include PBL curricula. As part of our Strategic Plan 2020—2023, we broadened our strategic direction to include supplemental Open Educational Resource (OER) Gold Standard PBL units with embedded performance assessments in core content areas. By 2028, we will have 104 total PBL units, two per grade level in the four core content areas, published and available to teachers.

Revised Professional Learning

Professional learning has been our core business for three decades. Our brand equity has been built on the high-quality design and facilitation of our professional learning services over time. Yet, recent market research illuminates a clear need for us to improve the fit between our professional learning and the market directions. Based on the flat professional learning market that is outpaced by online services and curricula, we see an opportunity to continue to grow our face-to-face professional learning organically and revise our services to include curriculum and shorter, self-paced professional learning experiences. By 2028, we plan to have all of the curriculum-based professional development designed and published for all 104 total PBL units.

Already, we have made great progress refining our professional services to include our PBL curriculum units. At PBL World 2023, our annual conference, we facilitated our first curriculum-based professional learning workshops featuring our newly created PBL science units with 44 middle school teachers. Participating teachers rated the workshops as *Outstanding* with a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 73. At PBL World 2024, we are offering six workshops.

We are also in the process of designing and testing short, self-paced professional learning that is embedded within the PBL units. Examples include tutorials, tips, short instructional videos, project testimonials, project success stories, strategy guides, and Q&A forums. All of these instructional resources are intended to give teachers the just-in-time support they need to implement PBL well in their classrooms.

New Digital Tools/Apps

We envision a modern digital solution that supports the use of the PBL curriculum with embedded professional learning, performance assessments, and actionable analytics, leveraging the use of generative AI. As shown in an initial snapshot of our digital solution below, we show how teachers can easily access digital professional learning. First, they can engage in *short tutorials, mini-courses*, or

workshops that offer more in-depth Do-It-Yourself (DIY) resources to support their implementation of PBL strategies or protocols. Or, teachers working on planning a lesson who want to learn quickly how to implement a teaching routine, like *See, Think, Wonder*, can watch a very short instructional video to accelerate their learning and implementation.

Generative AI is a critical component of the digital platform that offers students and teachers an opportunity to collect, receive, and use authentic feedback from student work to inform instruction and assess learning. We believe that our deep experience and expertise in high quality Project Based Learning (PBL) is a tremendous asset that can inform a PBL-enhanced Large Language Model (LLM) that can be built out and integrated with other expertise in math, second language acquisition, culturally responsive pedagogy, and much more to create a customized LLM that teachers and students can use to drive progress and performance and give leaders insights across students and classrooms. As part of the design process, we recognize the need to address bias in AI and plan to contract with external experts in the field to ensure that anti-bias is baked into the design of the LLM. We are excited about the opportunity to design these PBL AI tools for math and then bring our AI toolkit to other content areas.

Increased Reach & Growth

Our bold new direction will rapidly increase our reach from a combined total of 28,263 educators in 2025 to 232,805 in 2028 with significant acceleration from our subscription model digital solution. We also anticipate significant growth in our revenue from a combined total of \$13.1M in 2025 to \$28.5M in 2028.

Increased Organizational Capacity

Our bold new direction will require increased organizational capacity for scaling to over 200,000 educators in the next four years. We are planning to increase capacity in key areas such as technology, product development, operations, finances, sales, and marketing.

To get where we are today, we have continuously improved and increased our **organizational capacity** and efficiency. Since 2015, we have focused on building our capacity and creating a culture that supports and promotes our vision for all students, especially Black and Brown students, to engage in high quality PBL to deepen their learning and achieve success in college, career, and life. Today, our **staff** includes 52 full-time and 70 part-time



employees. This is an increase of 27 full-time and 40 part-time employees since 2017. Our full-time staff has increased substantially with 30% more staff of color since 2017. By 2028, we anticipate a head count of 79.8 FTE with increased capacity in key areas needed to support our bold new direction.

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