



THE SCIENCE *of* ASSET

Report to the Community 2011



Achieving Student Success
through Excellence in Teaching

Picture, if you will, this scene from modern physics: an image of unimaginable chaos, where nanoparticles whirl about without structure. But everything changes when one of the particles — known as a strange attractor — irresistibly draws others to it. Together, all the particles combine to create something beautiful and new.

Strange attractors are a phenomena that mystify scientists. They create an unexpected order that is breathtaking in form. It's an ideal metaphor to describe the workings of ASSET, where an amazingly diverse group of people and organizations come together every day to pioneer new ways of teaching and learning.

—
“However, in the realm of chaos, where the strange attractor emerges, and we
—

The resulting forms created by strange attractors can be found on the front and back covers, opening spread and page 6 in this report.



everything should fall apart,
observe order not chaos."

Margaret J. Wheatley | Leadership and the New Science

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One of the greatest challenges that an organization faces is its ability to adapt and change. It's a test in which ASSET excels.

SCIENCE *of* ASSET



When the phenomenon of “strange attractors” is applied to an organization, dynamic leaders and catalysts of change emerge to inspire and advance its mission. And that is exactly what is happening at ASSET today.

02
03

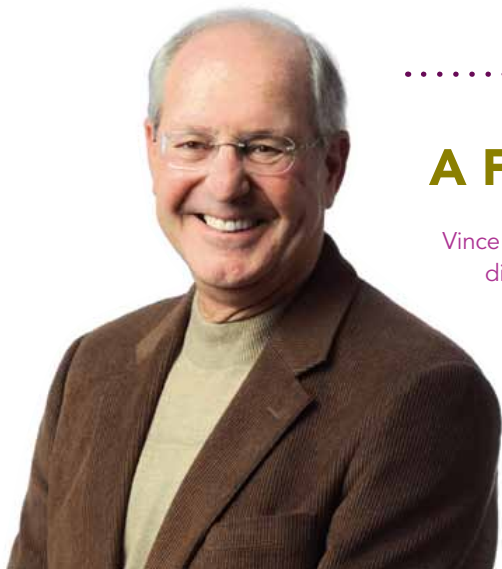
We're engaged in a period of remarkable change as ASSET takes on an exciting new national role during a time of growing economic constraint. Yet despite — or perhaps because of — the short-term barriers that face education today, we are looking to a future that envisions even greater demand for ASSET's programs and services.

Our historic roots are in science and our future lies in promoting excellence in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education.

But we are refining our focus, evolving into a professional development organization that offers a unique expertise in teaching.

In this new role, we will give teachers the tools they need to become even greater teachers — in every subject, from science and math to English and social studies. We will do so by helping them understand the best ways students learn...and implement the latest best practices for teaching.

As you will read in this report, ASSET applied for and received a federal Investing in Innovation (i3) grant that will enable it to deepen STEM education in Pennsylvania on an unprecedented level. It is an opportunity for phenomenal growth and impact, reaching hundreds more teachers and nearly a quarter million students.



A Fond Farewell to Vince Valicenti

Vince Valicenti joined ASSET in 1994, newly retired from a long and distinguished career as a teacher, counselor and principal in the Montour School District. He was looking for something that would help “keep him busy.” Instead, he found a cause that won his heart.

He brought to ASSET a critical first-hand understanding of the challenges faced by our key customers — teachers and administrators — and a deep affection for the students they serve.



But most importantly, through the i3 grant, we will be giving participating teachers the tools needed to create and nurture a collaborative, professional learning community in their schools — be it a public, private, charter or digital learning environment.

We've already laid the foundation for this initiative, starting with our first ASSET Leadership Academy in spring 2011. We're now developing the coaching and mentoring support to help teachers discover their own leadership and learning styles.

The long-term impact of these learning communities will be profound, transforming instructional practices and student work throughout our state — and serving as a model of national education reform. Here at ASSET, we are proud to embark on one of the most exciting and demanding periods in our history. We invite you to join us in this sea change of thinking and doing!

Cynthia Pulkowski

Acting Executive Director | ASSET Inc.

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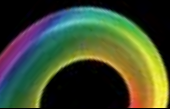
His insights have enabled us to forge long and trusting relationships with our member schools, develop quality, effective programs that respond to teacher needs in the classroom, and foster a culture of service that is uniquely "ASSET."

But after 17 years as ASSET's "second-in-command," Vince is leaving ASSET in capable hands. His contributions to our evolution are profound, from his leadership role in creating ASSET's signature

professional development programs to his steady guidance in recent years as we took on the exciting challenges of *Science: It's Elementary* and the new federal Investing in Innovation (i3) grant.

But Vince's most enduring legacy will be the sense of balance and goodwill he always championed at ASSET: promoting laughter along with serious discussion, good times as well as hard work.

You will not be forgotten!



The federal **Investing in Innovation** initiative — better known as i3 — focuses on sparking classroom reform nationwide.

SCIENCE *of* INNOVATION



04
05

ASSET’s receipt of a nationally competitive i3 grant to advance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education in Pennsylvania marks a major milestone in its development.

The Numbers Behind i3

49/2

Nationally, ASSET was one of just 49 i3 grant recipients selected from nearly 1,700 applicants – and was one of just two grant recipients in Pennsylvania.

\$22 million

ASSET was awarded a \$22 million i3 Validation grant, which included \$6 million in matching funds raised by ASSET to secure the grant. These matching funds were comprised largely of in-kind gifts and contributed labor, and applied in full toward the i3 grant project.

ASSET’s selection as an i3 grant recipient is a tremendous validation of our work over the past 17 years.

The scale of the project is immense, demanding an exceptional level of accountability and performance that is separate from ASSET’s many other initiatives statewide. Ultimately, however, the i3 program is expected to provide even more compelling proof of our ability to make a profound difference in Pennsylvania’s — and America’s — schools.





The initiative will have a profound, three-fold impact by:

Giving ASSET's innovative mission a platform for national implementation.



In announcing the selection of i3 grant recipients, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan noted that "All across America, innovative entrepreneurs are finding solutions to our most pressing educational challenges. i3 will support creative thinkers who test good ideas and take proven approaches to scale so that more children can benefit." i3 offers ASSET an unparalleled opportunity to showcase its proven approach to transforming science education to a national audience.

Expanding ASSET's reach to even greater numbers of teachers and students.



In each year for five years, 450 Pennsylvania teachers will engage in nine days of higher-level ASSET professional development – and then share their acquired knowledge with their school colleagues. Through the i3 Grant Program, ASSET has the potential to provide high-quality STEM education to more than 240,000 students across the Commonwealth.

Bringing ASSET's approach to often underserved rural and socio-economically challenged schools.



Through the resources of the i3 grant — and via new partnerships that have emerged to support it — ASSET will be offering in-person, online and video teacher training statewide. In addition to its Pittsburgh headquarters, ASSET will be developing comprehensive centers and satellite sites in central and eastern Pennsylvania.

The i3 grant has generated a wellspring of new support — but partnerships have always been at the heart of what ASSET does.

Our partners connect us to new ideas and the latest technologies.

ASSET’s partners represent virtually every enterprise, from energy to education, business to healthcare. Each brings a fresh new perspective to what we do — and connections that link us to innovative solutions.

Our partners let us serve growing numbers of teachers and students.

Our very first partnerships forged ASSET’s basic operational model, in which school districts provided teachers on loan to develop programs and provide training to other teachers. The success of these partnerships sparked a groundbreaking partnership with the state of Pennsylvania — *Science: It’s Elementary*. i3 will continue our tradition of partnerships.

SCIENCE *of* PARTNERSHIPS

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ASSET’s partners make the future possible. The following pages are an expression of our thanks for their many contributions.

Our partners give us critical resources — both financial and human — to do more.

This report is a celebration of how our partners support us through contributed services, generous grants, funding for innovative research and development, volunteer manpower and more.

Our partners create value and credibility for ASSET.

Our extensive network of partners played a critical role in ASSET’s selection for the i3 grant. In supporting ASSET, our partners say: “We believe your work is vital and we trust in the quality of your delivery.”

Simply stated, our partners transform ASSET and motivate us to do our very best. Our thanks for all you do!



“Partnerships are part of the very fiber of ASSET.”



Rebecca Lucore

President
ASSET Board of Directors
Executive Director
Bayer USA Foundation

Rebecca's own partnership with ASSET began when she started her career at Bayer in 1994. ASSET had just opened its doors, thanks to support and funding from Bayer and several other community organizations. Today, Rebecca is the proud mother of a first-grade student who delights in his ASSET science classes.

SAYING YES to SCIENCE



Why invest in science? Ask ASSET's Title Partners, who are passionate in their belief that leadership in science is vital to our nation's very future.

08
09



“The bottom line is that supporting ASSET makes good business sense for a STEM company like Bayer. Not only are we helping to nurture and develop a scientifically literate American citizenry, but also the next generation of inventors, innovators and discoverers who are critical to our company's long-term success.”

Gregory S. Babe | President & Chief Executive Officer | Bayer Corporation and Bayer MaterialScience LLC



“By providing graduate credits for educators, Carlow University's partnership with ASSET strengthens classroom-embedded professional development in K-8 science education. Through sustained support of teacher learning, this partnership contributes to the improvement of science instruction in schools in southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond.”

Margaret McLaughlin, Ph.D. | Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs | Carlow University

Advancement in virtually every enterprise — be it business, education, healthcare, technology or government — demands science literacy.



“ PLTW is excited to partner with ASSET in developing educators who will help shape the innovators of tomorrow. Through alternative training models, collaboration with other teachers and connections with higher education institutions, educators will bring the latest knowledge and best practices in STEM education to their classrooms, and ignite the imaginations of students.”

Thor S. Misko | Director of Post-Secondary Relations & Training | Project Lead The Way



“ SAFARI Montage is proud to help ASSET provide a platform for the delivery of standards-based STEM programs to students. SAFARI Montage believes in the importance of ASSET’s mission and is glad to be a part of enhancing visual learning for all students.”

Tim Beekman | President & Co-Founder | SAFARI Montage



“ UPMC Health Plan is proud to help Pennsylvania students achieve educational success in science. Our partnership with ASSET Inc. allows UPMC Health Plan to provide kids, their families and their teachers with useful tools and resources to achieve a healthy lifestyle...to ensure optimum learning.”

John Lovelace | President, UPMC for You, Inc. and Vice President, Children’s Health Insurance & Medicare Special Needs Plan | UPMC Health Plan

Signature



“EQT embraces a culture of innovation that helps produce a clean and abundant energy source — natural gas — using safe, economic and environmentally friendly techniques. EQT supports the ASSET team because its innovative techniques help teachers and their students experience learning in a new and creative way, especially in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math.”

David L. Porges | President & Chief Executive Officer | EQT Corporation



Where energy meets innovation.



volunteering made easy.

River Park Commons
RJ Equities LP



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Innovator



“Solid science and math education are the basis of our region’s — and our nation’s — future economic success. ASSET delivers valuable STEM teacher training, and Carnegie Science Center is proud to be a partner in delivering complementary hands-on informal experiences to excite young people about science and inspire them to explore careers in STEM-related fields.”

Ann Metzger and Ron Baillie | Co-Directors | Carnegie Science Center



One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh



Partner



“LANXESS is proud to support ASSET in its work to bring inquiry-based science education into the classroom through the development of teachers. ASSET’s success is reflected not only in the improved test results generated by the 140 school districts in which they work, but in the energy and attitude displayed by the 4,000 teachers and 150,000 students they impact.”

Randall S. Dearth | President & CEO | LANXESS Corporation



Our Other Supporters

“ASSET’s work with teachers and students has been outstanding and could be a model for the rest of the nation.”

David W. Hunter | Chairman | Hunter Associates, Inc.

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City Connections
Delta Education
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SCIENCE *of* TEACHING



Teachers say ASSET’s professional development programs don’t just make them better science teachers; they challenge them to be the best possible teachers they can be.

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“ I can’t say enough about the professional development and growth I experienced as an ASSET Resource Teacher. I was able to work with leading experts in education and science on a state and national level. **ASSET’s great strength is that it’s about ‘teachers teaching teachers’: We walk the walk, and talk the talk together.** It makes ASSET a credible and trusted resource for teachers.”

Karen Bordt | North Hills School District
Highcliffe Elementary School

“ Being an ASSET Resource Teacher exposed me to different ways of teaching and learning. It opened me up to a world of possibilities. I learned to step back, look at my practice and really consider how children learn. I’m a much more well-rounded and better teacher as a result. Now that I’m back in the classroom, **I encourage my students to ‘own what they learn’ by being strategic, critical and questioning thinkers.**”

Val Brown | Mt. Lebanon School District
Hoover Elementary School

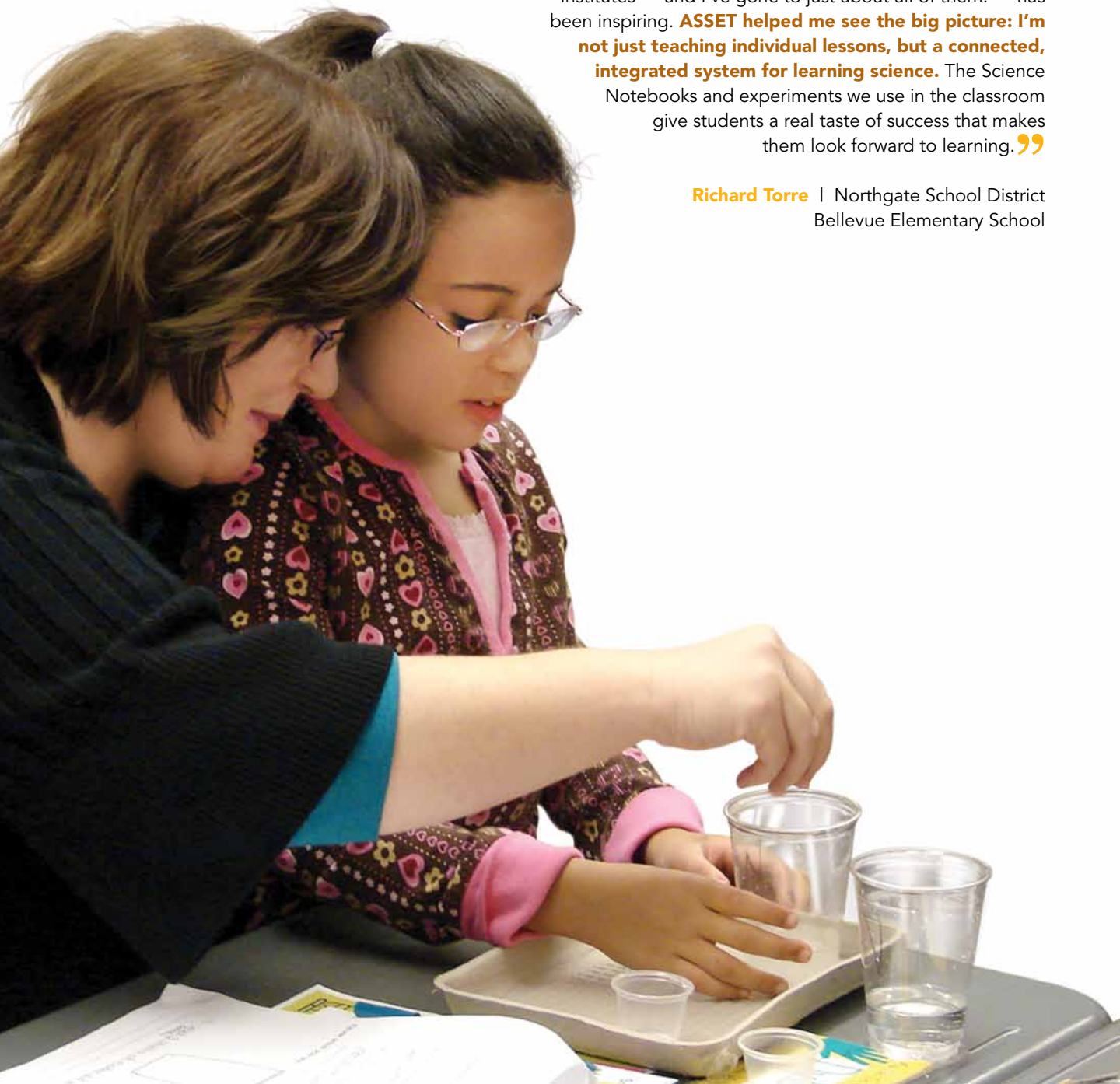


“ASSET gives teachers the tools to make our students lifelong learners — not just in science, but in all subjects.”

Jacqui King | West Allegheny School District

“The knowledge I gained through attending ASSET’s Institutes — and I’ve gone to just about all of them! — has been inspiring. **ASSET helped me see the big picture: I’m not just teaching individual lessons, but a connected, integrated system for learning science.** The Science Notebooks and experiments we use in the classroom give students a real taste of success that makes them look forward to learning.**”**

Richard Torre | Northgate School District
Bellevue Elementary School



“I remember ASSET making science class exciting because of all the sensory aspects of it. It was all very visual, which I believe helped me to relate the things I was learning to the ‘real world.’ Throughout high school I remained interested in science taking advanced chemistry and physics classes.”

Athena H. | Penn State University Graduate
Major: Supply Chain Management

“Having participated in the ASSET program in elementary school has greatly impacted my ongoing education. The hands-on curriculum helped to create critical thinking skills and analytical processes. ASSET is engaging and part of my fondest memories of grade school.”

Evan H. | Indiana University of Pennsylvania Graduate
Major: Economics

SCIENCE *of* LEARNING

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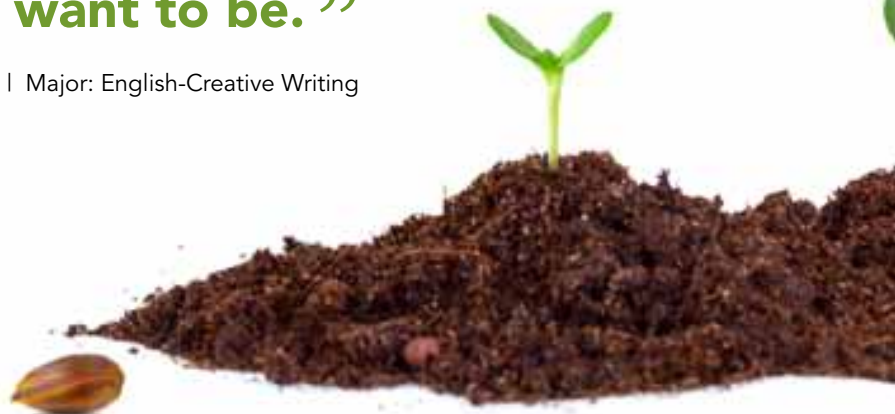
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ASSET’s hands-on, inquiry-based approach to learning inspires curious, engaged and confident learners in every subject.

“I loved getting my hands on the experiments and actually doing them myself. Those successes really boosted my self-confidence and helped me to realize that I can be whatever I want to be.”

Claire S. | Duquesne University | Major: English-Creative Writing



“ASSET makes science cool!”

Ben S. | University of Rochester
Major: Math, Engineering or Pre-med

“ASSET lessons are the ones that have stuck with me. I remember them in much greater detail than any other lessons from elementary school, and that means I learned more from ASSET science.”

Katy S. | Lehigh University
Major: Pre-med Concentration



ASSET Staff

(as of July 1, 2011)

Cynthia Pulkowski

Acting Executive Director

Administration

Karen Ahearn
Paul Baxter
Tom Benoit
Greg Carvlin
Meredith DeLecce
Carole Hopey
Soheila Lunney
Lyndsay Mansfield
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Maleea Johnson
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Jan Korenich
Lorraine McKinin
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Jessica Meyers
Christian Micah
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Lisa Mitchell
Rachael Nicoletto
Stephanie Rakowski
Emily Sasko
Karen Savitz
Linda Schatzman
Connie Siewert
Deborah Spencer
Renee Williams

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Avonworth
Barb Williams
Upper St. Clair

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Matthew Carroll
Domenic Chickini
Malik Fritz
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Earl Harrison
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Sunni Herndon
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Professional Development Facilitator
Gregg Beyer
Education Consultant
Barbara Brandt
Professional Development Facilitator
Johanna Chisnell
Professional Development Facilitator
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Professional Development Facilitator
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Maher Duessel LLC
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Gove Group Inc.
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Newton Consulting, LLC

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Ed Smith

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Chuck Sosko

Professional Development Facilitator

Anthony Stagno

Professional Development Facilitator

Carol Tucceri

Professional Development Facilitator

WestEd

Educational Consultants

Donna Wozniak

Professional Development Facilitator

Administrative Support Konsultants (ASK)

Provide administrative support for *Science: It's Elementary* professional development sessions held across the state.

Pat Aluise

Dave Carson

Alan Cypher

Jim Daley

Ned DiBenedetto

Barb Doak

Cathy Mosimann

John Mosimann

Don Murray

Bill Raymer

Jack Sheffler

Jim Smoyer

Ed Wozniak

University Partners Consultants

William Casile

Duquesne University

Karen Levitt

Duquesne University

Kalyani Raghavan

University of Pittsburgh (LDRC)

ASSET Resource Teacher Alumni

Joan Adams

South Allegheny/Charleroi

Bob Baldasare

Sto-Rox

Ginny Belko

West Allegheny

Carrie Betters

South Allegheny

Linda Boord

Upper St. Clair

Karen Bordt
North Hills
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Hampton
Jennifer Bresso
Penn Hills
Valerie Brown
Mt. Lebanon
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Upper St. Clair
Margie Ritson
Franklin Regional
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National Science Teachers
Association
Barb Williams
Upper St. Clair
Kristy Zelenz

School Partners

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Baldwin-Whitehall
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Brentwood Borough
Carlynton
Chartiers Valley
Clairton City
Cornell
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McKeesport Area
Montour
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North Hills
Northgate
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Penn Hills
Pine-Richland
Pittsburgh Urban Christian School
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Providence Heights Alpha School
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Riverview
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South Allegheny
South Park
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Conrad Weiser Area
Wyomissing Area
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Claysburg-Kimmel
Tyrone Area
Bucks County
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Karns City Area
Mars Area
Seneca Valley
South Butler County
Cambria County
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Avon Grove Charter School
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Clarion County
Clarion Area
Clarion-Limestone Area
Union
Clearfield County
Curwensville Area
West Branch Area
Columbia County
Berwick Area
Millville Area
Southern Columbia Area
Cumberland County
East Pennsboro Area
Dauphin County
Harrisburg City
Delaware County
Chester Community Charter School
Elk County
Johnsonburg Area
St. Marys Area
Erie County
Erie City
General McLane
Girard
Fayette County
Frazier
Forest County
Forest Area
Franklin County
Fannett-Metal
Fulton County
Central Fulton
Forbes Road
Huntingdon County
Mount Union Area
Indiana County
Homer-Center
Jefferson County
Brockway Area
Brookville Area
Lackawanna County
Carbondale Area
Lakeland
Lawrence County
Laurel
Mohawk Area
New Castle Area
Wilmington Area
Lebanon County
Lebanon
Lehigh County
Catasauqua Area
Luzerne County
Crestwood
Hanover Area
Wyoming Area
Wyoming Valley West
McKean County
Bradford Area
Kane Area
Smethport Area

Mercer County

Farrell Area
Greenville Area
Sharon City
Sharpsville Area

Montgomery County

Souderton Charter School
Collaborative

Northumberland County

Mt. Carmel Area
Shamokin Area

Philadelphia County

Global Leadership Academy
Charter School
Leadership Learning Partners
Charter School
Mathematics, Science &
Technology Community
Charter School
Southwest Leadership Academy
Charter School
Universal Institute Charter School
West Philadelphia Achievement
Charter Elementary School

Pike County

Delaware Valley

Potter County

Northern Potter
Oswayo Valley

Schuylkill County

Mahanoy Area
Pottsville Area
St. Clair Area
Schuylkill Haven Area
Tamaqua Area

Somerset County

Berlin Brothersvalley
Meyersdale Area

Susquehanna County

Forest City Regional
Mountain View

Tioga County

Southern Tioga

Venango County

Franklin Area

Washington County

California Area
Charleroi Area

York County

Southern York County
York City

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Wilmington, DE
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(EDC), Newton, MA
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Science (ETHOS), Elkhart, IN

Exploratorium, San Francisco, CA
National Science Resources Center
LASER (Leadership & Assistance
for Science Education Reform)
Center

- Alabama Regional LASER Site
 - California Regional LASER Site
 - Oklahoma Regional LASER Site
 - Rhode Island Regional LASER Site
 - South Carolina Regional
LASER Site
 - Tri-State LASER Regional
Partnership
 - Washington State Regional
LASER Site
- National Science Resources Center
(NSRC) Science & Literacy
Program, Washington, D.C.

State Partners

National Science Teachers
Association, PA: "Building
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PA Exxon Mobil
Pennsylvania Department
of Education
Pennsylvania Department of
Community & Economic
Development

**Materials Support Center
Volunteer Program**

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American Eagle Outfitters
AmeriCorps
Carnegie Mellon University
The Children's Institute
City Connections
Cornell-Abraxis
Duquesne University
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Pittsburgh Cares
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Pressley Ridge
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School Districts
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UPMC
UPS
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Westinghouse Electric Company

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Education Leadership Council

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Executive Director, CCAC–Allegheny
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To continuously improve teaching and learning.

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ASSET will powerfully impact the teaching and learning of science and math in Pennsylvania and beyond, while modeling sustainable organizational practices, and inspiring collaboration, stewardship and quality among those we serve, and they serve far into the future.



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