



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO:** Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent  
District 97 Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer

**RE:** Brooks Middle School and LEAP Innovations Partnership

**DATE:** December 20, 2016

**Type of Report:** Background Information for a Special Report

**Purpose of the Report:** To provide background about a potential partnership with LEAP Innovations

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## Background Information:

During the meeting on December 6 Brooks Middle School Principal Khan and Chris Liang-Vergara, Chief of Learning Innovation at LEAP Innovations, provided the Board with a special report about Pilot Network Cohort Four for Brooks Middle School. LEAP Innovations is a Chicago-based nonprofit organization connecting innovation and education to “reinvent our one-size-fits-all system and transform the way kids learn.” LEAP takes educators through a planning and implementation process coupled with professional development.

LEAP works directly with school districts, educators, and innovators to discover, pilot and scale personalized learning and innovative practices in the classroom and beyond. LEAP serves as a national hub for a new, collaborative ecosystem of the best and brightest education innovators, digital entrepreneurs, and thought leaders committed to reinventing education in our country. LEAP Innovations is currently working with more than 100 partners. In Chicago, LEAP is working with more than 40 schools.

On October 17, a team of district office administrators met with LEAP Innovations to learn about a pilot network cohort that assists school districts with establishing a 21<sup>st</sup> century student-centered learning environment while increasing student achievement. The personalized learning model aligns to the district’s vision of providing an equitable, inclusive, positive learning environment that focuses on the whole child and could benefit District 97 students by increasing student achievement and the rigor of lessons. LEAP Innovations shared its planned and purposeful approach of personalized learning, using data to drive instruction, having students take charge of their own learning and incorporating students strengths and opportunities for growth into daily instruction. As a result of this meeting, the district administration asked the consultants from LEAP Innovations to return to District 97 on November 1, to present to the middle school principals and team leaders from the buildings to determine interest in applying for the grant.

At this meeting, Principal Khan shared her previous interactions with LEAP. She had completed a Critical Friends Review at one of the LEAP Pilot Network Schools and had been impressed with the level of learning in the classrooms as well as the student growth and academic achievement. Principal Khan requested a site visit to

the school, which was conducted on December 1 with the Brooks middle school leadership team, a team of sixth grade teachers and the CAAO. Following the site visit, the Brooks leadership team decided to submit a competitive application to become a member of the LEAP Pilot Network -cohort four. A maximum of thirty-five schools will be selected for the cohort. If awarded the opportunity, a team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and the Brooks leadership team will begin participating in professional learning in January and planning for personalized learning implementation in August.

**Action:**

If our application is selected, the administration will request Board approval for \$15,000 to support the middle school team during the 2016-17 school year, and an additional \$10,000 for the 2017-2018 school year. There are funds in the current budget to support this expense, and money will be included in the FY18 budget to support the expense for next school year.



