



## MDE Board Development Grant

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) awarded Novation Education Opportunities (NEO) the Board Development and Training Grant in April 2018. NEO was tasked with establishing charter school board training, designing educational curriculum (e.g., developing videos and providing resources), and developing a website and space (“board exchange”) for board members to access and share resources. In years two and three of the grant, NEO developed board training modules, including video production of curriculum and interactive web-based trainings for charter school board members in Minnesota.

### Key Facts about the Program

- Number of training topics: 38
- Number of users: 1,618 users who had accessed the site, representing 173 of 186 (96%) charter schools in Minnesota
- 130 users have completed at least five courses

### Objectives and Impacts

- NEO’s program objectives varied throughout its grant period, but fell into several key categories:
  - Increases in capacity and the hiring of personnel
  - Development and improvement of data platforms and websites
  - Development of additional courses, videos, and resources
  - Improving the quality and applicability of courses
  - Improving accessibility of training materials
  - Increasing data collection related to participation and mastery of course concepts
  - Increasing outreach to additional board members
  - Facilitating knowledge sharing between board members
- Rather than implementing set pathways, or a set progression of course topics board members would need to take in order, based on participant feedback surveys NEO determined a more individualized, pick-and-choose model of selecting courses from a list of offerings better met participant needs.
- NEO has leveraged relationships with charter school authorizers to spread awareness of the trainings and resources they make available. NEO also encouraged boards to set aside time in board meetings for all members in attendance to participate in a training together.

## Recommendations

Based on ICF's evaluation, MDE staff may want to consider the following:

1. Consider implementing more advanced data tracking for training platforms facilitated through the board development grant.
2. Further improve communication between NEO staff, MDE staff, and NEO's external evaluator.
3. Gather more comprehensive user experience data from board members who have completed trainings.