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SCHOOL BY DESIGN LAUNCHES AS INDEPENDENT COMPANY TO HELP SCHOOLS IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS, INNOVATION, AND EQUITY

[9/26/16, Waltham, MA] – This week, School by Design (SxD), in agreement with Amplify and with support of management and private investors, became an independent company dedicated to helping education leaders at the building, district, and state levels design the schools their kids and teachers need, within the resources they have.

SxD will be led by Andrew Joseph, a senior executive at Amazon Education and the co-founder of TenMarks Education, Inc., a personalized online math program. Vicki Phillips, the previous K-12 Director of Education - College Ready at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will join the SxD Board of Directors, along with David Stevenson, Executive Vice President of Amplify.

SxD brings a design thinking approach to education’s annual resource planning cycle—from district budgeting to master scheduling—so that it shifts from an administrative process to a strategy for instruction. Delivered through an online platform, analytic tools, and technical assistance, SxD services include:

- *Specialized resource audits* that give districts and schools a quick way to see how resource allocation and utilization are currently impacting instructional decisions related to teacher time, student time, equity, class size, and more.
- *Scenario planning* to uncover the different ways budgets and time could be used based on the school experience leaders and teachers want to provide students and the supports staff need. Examples include: looking at ways to manage class size within current budget while also finding more time for teacher professional development; and exploring school designs developed around student learning opportunities such as STEAM, problem-based learning, and community-based learning.
- *Decision-making* supports for districts and schools to make informed decisions about budgeting, scheduling, and school model options so that they support, not block, high quality teaching and learning experiences.

“School by Design is tackling one of the biggest challenges for districts and schools: making sure resources and policies support teachers and students,” explains Vicki Phillips. “The SxD services and supports are invaluable to schools because they help solve, within budget, the age-old ‘pain points’ that undermine good teaching—issues such as class size, time for teacher collaboration and professional learning, and scheduling for interdisciplinary learning and student field experiences.”

School by Design is built around the leading work of Marilyn Crawford on resource alignment, master scheduling, and professional development in service of innovative teaching and learning. Over the past few years, School by Design has worked with dozens of districts and CMOs across the country to find thousands of hours for teacher professional development and planning, while helping schools address the unique learning needs of their students within budget.

“School by Design helps you solve problems. Most people know what their issues are, but School by Design helps them know what to do about it,” states Steve Broome, director of state development for high school and middle grades at the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Working with education leaders, Steve and the team at SREB use the SxD audit and scenario planning to help schools turn their High Schools that Work principles—such as multiple pathways to college and careers—into reality.

The SxD spinoff enables Amplify to focus on its core offerings of digitally-enabled instruction, assessment, and professional development for K-5 reading and language arts and middle school ELA, math, and science. As Amplify’s and SxD’s services and products are distinct but complementary, the organizations expect to collaborate to serve districts and schools.

“I’m honored to be leading School by Design to the next level,” says Andrew Joseph. “We are uniquely positioned in this too-often ignored space where resources meet instruction. Our platform and services have helped a number of districts and schools solve their resource allocation and scheduling challenges and uncover the possibilities for their schools. We’re excited to now help other educators create the conditions in which teaching and learning can thrive.”

As an independent company, School by Design will be better able to respond to the evolving needs of educators and expand its suite of products and services. Through actionable analytics, virtual experiences, and new school models, SxD will further its position as the leader of education design thinking—helping school leaders leverage data, see all of the opportunities for engaging, high quality schooling within their resources, and make informed decisions for the types of schools their teachers, parents, and students want and deserve.