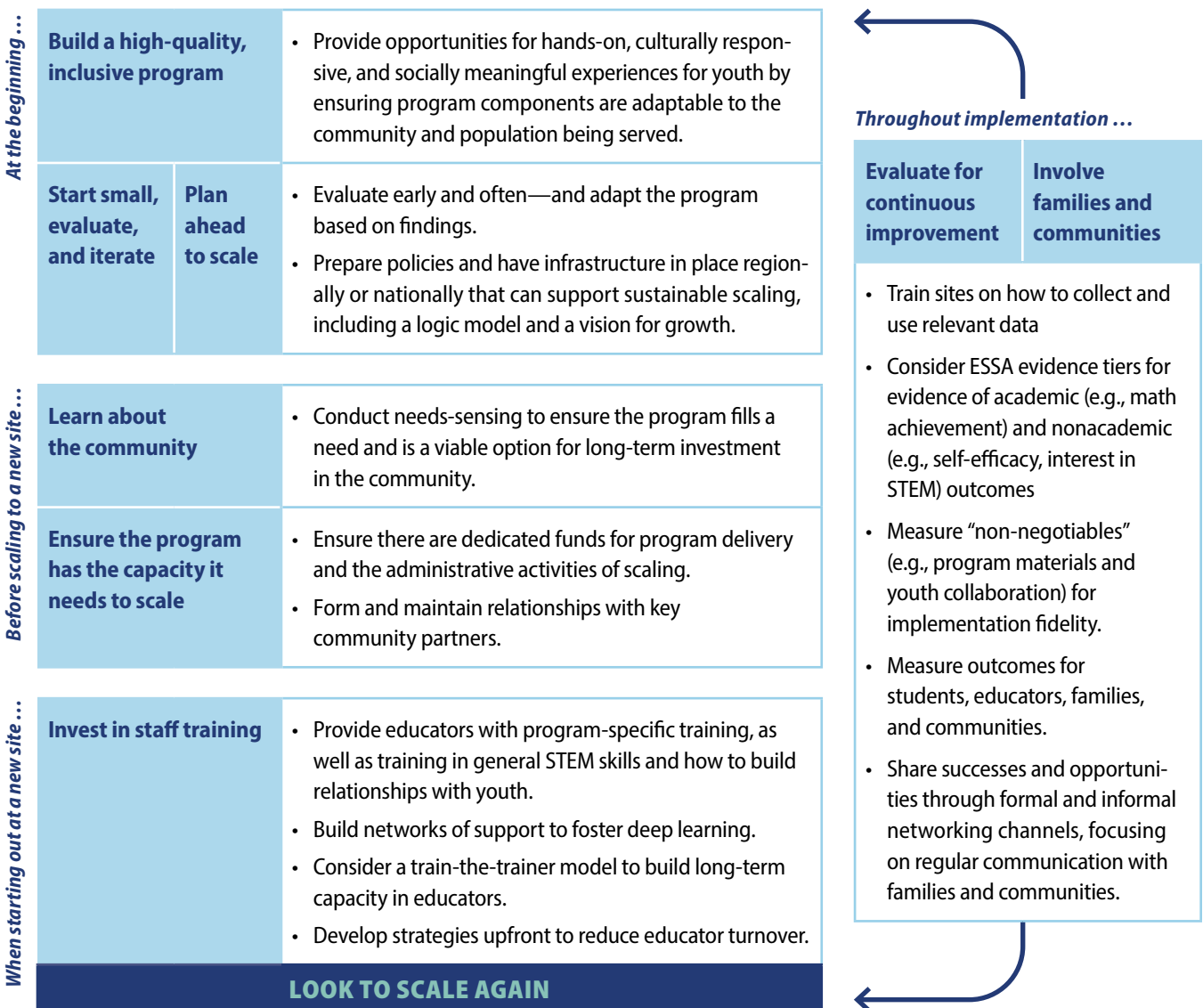# Pathway to Scaling OST STEM Programs

Education Northwest recently conducted a national scan of out-of-school time science, technology, engineering, and math (OST STEM) programs[1] for the Overdeck Family Foundation. Overall, 25 OST STEM programs met our criteria for inclusion, and we learned more about them through surveys and interviews.[2] The scan's goal was to describe the experiences of OST STEM programs that have scaled regionally and nationally and to provide data to program leaders and funders seeking to expand OST STEM opportunities in their communities. This infographic outlines scaling-related themes that emerged across programs.

At the beginning…

Build a high-quality, inclusive program		• Provide opportunities for hands-on, culturally responsive, and socially meaningful experiences for youth by ensuring program components are adaptable to the community and population being served.
Start small, evaluate, and iterate	Plan ahead to scale	• Evaluate early and often—and adapt the program based on findings. • Prepare policies and have infrastructure in place regionally or nationally that can support sustainable scaling, including a logic model and a vision for growth.

Before scaling to a new site…

Learn about the community	• Conduct needs-sensing to ensure the program fills a need and is a viable option for long-term investment in the community.
Ensure the program has the capacity it needs to scale	• Ensure there are dedicated funds for program delivery and the administrative activities of scaling. • Form and maintain relationships with key community partners.

When starting out at a new site…

Invest in staff training	• Provide educators with program-specific training, as well as training in general STEM skills and how to build relationships with youth. • Build networks of support to foster deep learning. • Consider a train-the-trainer model to build long-term capacity in educators. • Develop strategies upfront to reduce educator turnover.

LOOK TO SCALE AGAIN

Throughout implementation …

Evaluate for continuous improvement	Involve families and communities

- Train sites on how to collect and use relevant data
- Consider ESSA evidence tiers for evidence of academic (e.g., math achievement) and nonacademic (e.g., self-efficacy, interest in STEM) outcomes
- Measure "non-negotiables" (e.g., program materials and youth collaboration) for implementation fidelity.
- Measure outcomes for students, educators, families, and communities.
- Share successes and opportunities through formal and informal networking channels, focusing on regular communication with families and communities.

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[1] The landscape scan was limited to programs that met criteria developed by the Overdeck Family Foundation and Education Northwest. These were the criteria for inclusion: the program must provide implementation support to sites and staff members, the program serves students ages 5–14 for about 20 hours or more, and the program has expanded to operate in at least more than one city—but preferably regionally or nationally.

[2] More information can be found in *Scaling Out-of-School Time STEM Programming: A National Scan.*