

Note: Items in green have successfully been implemented, blue indicates implementation is in progress, yellow could be visited soon — shades indicate priority (the darker, the sooner we expect implementation), red cannot be tested right now, white have not been tested yet.

Tier 1—Must Do				
Website	Website maintenance	Necessary to maintain basic functions of a mission critical component	Ongoing	Director of Operations/Outsource to Unity
Website	Basic SEO on all articles	Necessary for users to find your articles through search	Ongoing	Reporters/Editors/Final Editor
Website	Weekly website analytics with analysis and interpretation provided by the leadership team	Necessary to understand how content is performing and how the audience is engaging	Weekly	All/Leadership Team
Website	URL structure—with dates for timely news, without dates for evergreen features	Necessary to provide context to users and provide the best information for Google's indexing	Ongoing	Reporters/Editors
Website	Include newsletter signups in every article	This is a low effort way to continually drive new newsletter signups	Ongoing	Reporters
Website	Website optimization	Regularly assessing how users are interacting with the site and articles on the homepage helps to optimize the site overtime. These can be small changes, as opposed to large site changes	Ongoing	Mebane (with recommendations from leadership)
Website	Include basic social sharing functionality and optimize share text when possible	Basic social sharing functionality is expected by audiences from a news organization	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Support
Website	Leadership team to determine high performing articles for further optimization on an ongoing basis	Optimizing high performing articles will help drive more traffic to EdNC's site and improve its domain authority	Ongoing	Leadership Team
Website	Keyword research to drive search-first articles and SEM campaigns	Keyword research will help reporters improve SEO for their articles and the SEM campaigns	Monthly	Eric
Newsletters	Continue using MailChimp as the email provider for EdNC	Keeping all of the newsletters within MailChimp will keep things streamlined and be more efficient for staff	Ongoing	Reporters/Engagement Director
Newsletters	Overhaul the structure of MailChimp lists and groups	The structure of the MailChimp lists needs to be revised to make more sense, even if it costs slightly more. Everyone on staff who uses MailChimp then needs to be trained on how it is structured to maintain it moving forward.	One-time	Engagement Director/Support
Newsletters	Develop and distribute EdWeekly	Audiences find value in providing them with the education news they need to know on a weekly basis	Weekly	Engagement Support
Newsletters	Develop and distribute EdDaily	Audiences find value in providing them with the education news they need to know each day	Daily	Mebane
Newsletters	Develop and distribute Awake58	Audiences interested in the community college system find value in the weekly Awake58 emails	Weekly	Nation Hahn
Newsletters	Develop and distribute Early Bird	Audiences interested in early childhood education find value in the biweekly Early Bird emails	Biweekly	Liz Bell
Social Media	Continue posting daily social content to Facebook	Facebook drives a significant amount of traffic so daily posting on the platform is necessary	Ongoing	Engagement Support
Social Media	Run Facebook ads as campaigns (instead of boosting) to better assess their impact	Facebook ads help to drive traffic to the site and expand EdNC's audience base. The impact of the ads is easier to assess by setting up separate campaigns instead of boosting individual posts	Ongoing	Engagement Support
Social Media	Continue posting tweets daily on EdNC's Twitter account	Regular posting on Twitter helps expand the audiences who sees EdNC content	Ongoing	Engagement Support
Social Media	Run Instagram ads to grow followers to at least 10,000 to unlock swipe-up functionality	Instagram ads are the only way to grow a significant following on the platform and to unlock the swipe up feature	One-time project	Engagement Director/Support
Social Media	Post on Instagram consistently, at least 4 times a week through posts or Stories	Consistent posting on Instagram is key to growing a following and ensuring your content is seen	Ongoing	Engagement Support
Social Media	Send daily tweets to EdNC team	Expands the audience for EdNC content through employees	Daily	Engagement Support
Social Media	Maintain posting on social media for EdNC's Editor-in-Chief and Head of Growth	EdNC's Editor-in-Chief are active on social media, so social media support from the engagement team can help free up their time to work on other more pressing issues	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Social Media	Maintain posting on social media for EdNC's public-facing leadership team	EdNC's leadership team is very active in the community, so the engagement team could provide extra support on social media to free the team up for other activities	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Leadership Team
Engagement Tools	Use Public Input's survey functionality for reporting	The surveys provide an opportunity to get input from audiences and ground stories in data	As needed	Reporters
Engagement Tools	Use surveys during and after events for both EdNC and partner organizations	The surveys provide an opportunity to get input from audiences and add value to events	As needed	Engagement Support/Reporters
Membership Models	Concept what membership means for EdNC and what the program could look like, including year-end communications and website language	This will be the foundation for any membership-related activities	One-time	Mebane/Nation
Events	Coordinate community visits for funders, philanthropists, and education leaders, COVID-permitting	The community visits are important to funders and education leaders, and they are directly aligned with EdNC's mission	6 times/year	Mebane/Nation/Caroline
Brand Building	Buy swag for employees to wear when they are out visiting communities and representing EdNC, like sweatshirts or jackets	Employee swag would help employees show up consistently in communities and represent the EdNC brand well, while instilling a sense of pride in employees	Ongoing	Caroline
Brand Building	Buy swag like pens, notebooks, water bottles, and stickers to share with community members when visiting	Swag for community visits helps expand EdNC's brand awareness	Ongoing	Caroline
Brand Building	Carry out the branding from the Awake58 and Early Bird newsletters to the website and social media	The Awake58 and Early Bird branding should be carried out on the website and on social media to make them seem like cohesive brands	One-time	Nation/Liz
Brand Building	Sponsor events for organizations as needed for relationship building	EdNC should continue to sponsor events when it helps to build or maintain relationships	As needed	Director of Operations
Brand Building	Create a custom piece of swag, like a special roast of coffee beans, to share with individuals who have a strong relationship with EdNC	Custom EdNC swag that is aligned with the mission helps deepen relationships with key stakeholders	Ongoing	Caroline
Social Media	Develop EdNC's LinkedIn page and begin posting articles 3-5 times per week	There are many education professionals on LinkedIn, so it should be the next platform for content distribution and engagement after Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, the texting communities, and the ambassador Facebook group are established	Ongoing	Nation
Newsletters	Conduct quarterly list health activities, including reengagement campaigns and purging inactive subscribers	To improve deliverability, quarterly list cleaning is needed, including reengagement campaigns and purging inactive subscribers	Quarterly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Website	Article optimization	Proactively optimizing articles, headlines, anticipating traffic sources for stories	Ongoing	Eric

Tier 2—Should Do				
Website	Include a fundraising request at the bottom of each article to drive recurring donations	This is an easy way to increase revenue from individual donations, especially recurring donations	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Reporters
Website	Develop a customized dashboard either through Parse.ly/Chartbeat or hire a contractor to custom build it	This is vital to understanding how EdNC's audience is engaging with the content and to make informed, strategic choices moving forward	One-time with ongoing maintenance	Leadership Team/Engagement Director/Contractor (if custom build)
Website	Build landing pages for newsletter signups	Landing pages are critical for effective list acquisition campaigns for search	As needed	Engagement Director/Outsource to Unity
Website	Determine whether it is possible to add auto-archiving functionality on the EdNC website, similar to the NY Times	This will help provide context when users share older EdNC content	One-time	Nation/Alisa
Website	Basic SEM campaigns and campaign maintenance	SEM campaigns have the potential to drive more quality traffic to the site, and with the Google grant it would be a missed opportunity to not focus some efforts on maintaining the campaigns	Weekly	Engagement Director/Support
Website	Strategic SEM campaign analysis to update/revise campaigns	Reviewing the strategy on a quarterly basis will allow for larger changes to SEM campaigns based on changes in EdNC's editorial content	Quarterly	Engagement Director
Website	Develop splash pages to highlight key articles/fundraising campaigns	Splash pages support both content distribution and engagement, since they point users to specific articles or fundraising campaigns	Monthly	Engagement Director/Outsource to Unity
Website	Implement Opt-In Monster to drive newsletter signups and traffic to major news	While Opt-In Monster requires both additional staff time and resources, it can help drive further newsletter signups and create a better user experience for audiences interested in specific verticals	One-Time	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Website	Optimize Opt-In Monster pop-up experience	If Opt-In Monster is implemented, it will require biweekly optimization to ensure the experience is relevant for audiences	Bi-weekly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Website	Purchase functionality (Pico) to streamline process for creating landing pages and fundraising campaigns	If EdNC begins to run monthly or weekly pushes for newsletter subscriptions, Pico can be helpful to make the process more efficient, but would require more staff time to implement and maintain	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/
Website	Purchase Pushly to implement push notifications to readers and leverage notifications once per week	Pushly will likely have a small, but loyal user base for push notifications. The platform would require its own workflow and ongoing maintenance so the push notifications are timely and relevant	Weekly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Run monthly paid list acquisition campaigns through search and Facebook starting in February with Phillip Smith	Paid list acquisition campaigns will help to move audiences down the engagement funnel	Monthly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Scrape teacher emails using the Instant Data Scraper tool and the database of school websites	A database of teacher emails would be a huge asset for EdNC, so it is worth the time to go through the school websites and scrape emails where possible	Annual	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Email scraped addresses to opt-in to EdNC emails	Once the emails have been scraped, the teachers need to opt into emails from EdNC	Annual	Engagement Director
Newsletters	Establish a welcome series of at least 2-3 emails	The welcome emails help keep new newsletters subscribers engaged and moving down the engagement funnel	One-time	Engagement Director/Reporters
Newsletters	Review welcome series twice a year to find opportunities to improve the series	With newsletters being an important distribution method, the welcome series should be reevaluated twice a year to ensure it continues to make sense	Biannual	Engagement Director
Newsletters	Develop quarterly fundraising appeal emails	Quarterly fundraising appeals will help EdNC generate more recurring revenue from individual donors and engender more loyalty	Quarterly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Run weekly paid list acquisition campaigns through search and Facebook	Running more frequent list acquisition campaigns will improve the efficiency of campaigns and grow list subscribers faster	Weekly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Create special newsletters for breaking news to send to EdDaily/EdWeekly subscribers	Newsletters for breaking news will make EdNC more valuable to audiences who want updates on critical education news	As needed	Reporters/Engagement Director
Newsletters	Create special issue-focused newsletters to cover a particular topic in-depth	Special issue-focused newsletter add value to audiences and deepens audience loyalty	As needed	Reporters/Engagement Director
Newsletters	Develop two email courses per year to cover topics of particular interest	Email courses provide value to audiences and can be a good introduction to the type of valuable information EdNC can offer audiences	Annual	Engagement Director/Reporters
Social Media	Create and implement a community management plan to interact with users across social platforms	Before developing or reengaging any community, EdNC needs a community management plan to set standards for engaging with audiences in a consistent and appropriate manner	Ongoing	Engagement Director/EIC/Head of Growth
Social Media	Develop and maintain a Facebook group for EdNC superusers and ambassadors to use them as a focus group	The Facebook group will help with communications to the ambassadors and can serve as a focus group for new ideas for EdNC	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Head of Growth/Engagement Support
Social Media	Develop Instagram-first content on a weekly basis that includes both Stories and posts	Instagram is a unique platform in that successful content tends to require Instagram-first thinking. This will require more multimedia resources, but would be helpful in expanding engagement once there is a larger follower base	Ongoing	Multimedia Designers/Engagement Support
Social Media	Identify a group of EdNC ambassadors who are willing to share EdNC's content on their social media platforms	EdNC ambassadors would expand the audience base with relevant stakeholders and engender loyalty among ambassadors	Ongoing	Engagement Director/EIC/Head of Growth
Social Media	Run LinkedIn advertising campaign for the first six months after the page's launch to grow followers	LinkedIn ads are necessary to grow the followers on the page and to ensure the content reaches the intended audience	One-time	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Engagement Tools	Reengage EdNC's texting community and continue to grow subscribers	For the database of phone numbers to be useful, EdNC needs to reengage the community of subscribers and provide value to them on a consistent basis. Otherwise, they will unsubscribe and the list will become less valuable over time	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Engagement Tools	Manage the texting community daily and pose a prompt at least twice per month	Daily management of the community and engaging the community at least twice per month is necessary to keep the community relevant for users	Ongoing	Engagement Support
Engagement Tools	Monetize surveys or provide surveys in-kind to organizations that are strategically aligned with EdNC	Organizations see reach as being valuable for their events, so EdNC should continue to provide this service as needed for relationship building and to grow the texting database	Ongoing	Engagement Support/Reporters

Membership Models	Develop language on the EdNC site that provides a detailed value proposition for supporting the organization	This will be the foundation for any fundraising/membership campaigns that EdNC runs	One-time	Engagement Director/Mebane/Nation
Membership Models	Send donors a small annual thank you gift	Small gifts show appreciation for donors and serve as another touch point in the relationship	Annual	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Membership Models	Develop a simple membership program that allows readers to sign up for a recurring donation in support of the organization	A simple membership program will help create a sense of loyalty among donors and encourage donors to make recurring versus one-time donations to EdNC	One time	Engagement Director/Head of Growth/Engagement Support
Events	Hold occasional listening tours in key verticals	The listening tours provide a lot of value for reporters and for relationship building	As needed	Reporters
Events	Hold quarterly webinars for major topic areas or new policies	Expert webinars are aligned with EdNC's mission and are valuable to audience members who are interested in learning about new policies or programs	Quarterly	Reporters/Engagement Support
Events	Coordinate monthly community visits for funders, philanthropists, and education leaders, COVID-permitting	More frequent community visits provide additional opportunities to build relationships with and brief funders, stakeholders, and education leaders	Monthly	Engagement Director/EIC/Head of Growth
Events	Create and host an annual event that brings together policymakers and leaders across the education industry to advance EdNC's mission	While these types of events are costly and time-consuming to pull off, they provide a great deal of value to audiences and funders and are aligned with EdNC's mission	Annual	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Additional Staff—partner with another organization
Brand Building	Brand other verticals on EdNC.org as relevant to build out followings	Branding verticals helps to create consistency and brand awareness for the topics that EdNC covers	One-time	Designers/Engagement Director/Head of Growth/EIC
Brand Building	Buy custom swag (like the coffee) for EdNC to give on community visits, to donors, and to individuals with a strong relationship with EdNC	Purchasing more of the customized swag will require more funds, but would be valuable for relationship building with key stakeholders and donors	Ongoing	Engagement Director
Syndication and Partnerships	Update republishing guidelines to include language about signing up for EdNC newsletters, a description of EdNC, and instructions on adding rel="canonical" to the link to the original story	While difficult to enforce, updating the republishing guidelines can potentially provide further benefits to EdNC when another entity republishes EdNC content	One time	Engagement Director
Tier 3—Wish List				
Website	Reevaluate SEM campaigns and keywords	Spending more time evaluating the SEM campaigns on a weekly basis will help generate more value from the campaigns through optimization	Weekly	Engagement Support
Website	Purchase more advanced social sharing plugin that offers customizable sharing language and ability to highlight text to tweet	Advanced social sharing would require staff time and resources to maintain, but would create an easier and more customizable experience for users	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Website	Publish content regularly through the Apple News service, including reformatting individual pieces and ensuring content looks correct on the platform	Apple News can provide another distribution source, but can be very time consuming when reformatting articles. The platform is known to not drive as much traffic to small publishers, so it takes more effort to build a following	Ongoing	Reporters/Editors
Newsletters	Conduct monthly list health activities, including reengagement campaigns and purging inactive subscribers	Monthly list health activities will help keep newsletter lists in the best shape to improve deliverability and engagement with subscribers	Monthly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Newsletters	Revise reengagement campaigns on a monthly basis	Looking at the reengagement campaigns on a monthly basis will help to improve the campaigns over time and retain more subscribers	Monthly	Engagement Director
Newsletters	Develop new email courses on a quarterly basis	Email courses are valuable to audiences and another way to deepen loyalty to EdNC	Quarterly	Engagement Director/Reporters
Newsletters	Buy Revue to upscale newsletters to be purpose-built for publishers	Revue is a lower priority because it adds a great deal of complexity to workflows and measurement and would be another cost source while only adding a little value	One-time transition, ongoing maintenance	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Reporters
Social Media	Develop and maintain Facebook groups for key verticals	Facebook groups offer another collaborative space for audiences to engage with each other and EdNC reporters on topics they care about	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Reporters
Social Media	Develop Facebook journalist pages for EdNC reporters who wish to participate	Most EdNC team members do not want a journalist page and do not use Facebook for reporting, so this is a lower priority	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support
Engagement Tools	Develop and maintain multiple texting groups based on relevant verticals and breaking news	Texting groups add another way for EdNC to grow engagement and deepen loyalty with audiences based on the topics they care about	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Reporters
Membership Models	Develop a multi-tiered membership program that provides opportunities for readers to get an inside look at EdNC's reporting process	This membership model would require more time and effort to create, but would be a vehicle to a more personal relationship between EdNC and members	Ongoing	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Head of Growth
Events	Host quarterly listening tours for each vertical to help direct content for the following months	More frequent listening tours provide more opportunities for reporters to build relationships with sources	Quarterly	Reporters
Events	Hold monthly webinars for major topic areas or new policies	Audiences find webinars valuable and create an opportunity to expand engagement with target audiences. Having consistent monthly webinars makes EdNC more top-of-mind for audiences	Monthly	Reporters/Engagement Director
Events	Hold screening events for documentaries that include a Q&A with the creators and the participants	Screening events help with the distribution of documentaries and relationship building with communities covered in the documentary	As needed	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Reporters
Events	Hold monthly informal events like trivia nights and happy hours to build relationships with readers and the community	Informal events provide a low touch way of engaging with EdNC and getting to know the organization	Monthly	Engagement Director/Engagement Support/Reporters
Brand Building	Carry out branding from verticals into any new Facebook groups, texting communities, etc.	Incorporating branding from different verticals across all relevant activities takes more design resources, but can help to provide a consistent experience when building audiences	Ongoing	Designers/Engagement Director
Syndication and Partnerships	Develop functionality on the website for users to click a button and see content to republish in HTML format that follows the EdNC republishing guidelines	The functionality would require extra funds to implement but would make republishing content much easier for other organizations	One time	Engagement Director/Outsource
Syndication and Partnerships	If there is a relevant opportunity for investigative reporting, EdNC should consider partnering with another news organization on a series	While investigative reporting is not a focus for EdNC, the organization should consider it if the right opportunity comes up and there are staff resources available to participate	As needed	Reporters/Editors