Amanda Griffies

UX Researcher

Hi!
My name is Amanda Griffies.

I am an UX Researcher who lives in Cary, NC. I have a passion for human-centered design and design research. My background in industrial design gives me an unique perspective on the UX design process and informs my practice.

EDUCATION

Nielsen Norman Group
UX Certification, #1020946
December 2017

North Carolina State University
Bachelor of Industrial Design
Magna Cum Laude,
December 2017

Prague Institute Study Abroad
4.0 GPA,
June 2016

Sandhills Community College
Associates in Arts
Summa Cum Laude,
December 2013

EXPERIENCE

Associate UX Research Specialist, May 2018 - Present

Lenovo, Morrisville, NC

- Conduct research for Lenovo.com globally
- Create screening questions, research questions, tasks, and test materials
- Create reports of test results that describe the findings and recommend actions
- Run usability tests, moderated and unmoderated
- Design quantitative surveys and site intercepts
- Conduct ethnographic research on small/ medium business owners
- Manage user panel of 10,000+ participants

UX Design Intern, May 2017- Jan. 2018

Participate, Chapel Hill, NC

- Propose new research areas, design research methods, conduct research, synthesize research, present findings to stakeholders
- Create screening questions, interview and usability testing questions, and research guides
- Create wireframes, high-fidelity mockups, and interactive prototypes
- Create personas and user journey maps to guide design work on the platform

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Jira and Pivotal Tracker
- Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook
- Usertesting.com, GroupSolver, SurveyMonkey, Lookback.io, Optimal Workshop, dScout
- Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign
- Sketch, Invision, and Principle

CONTACT

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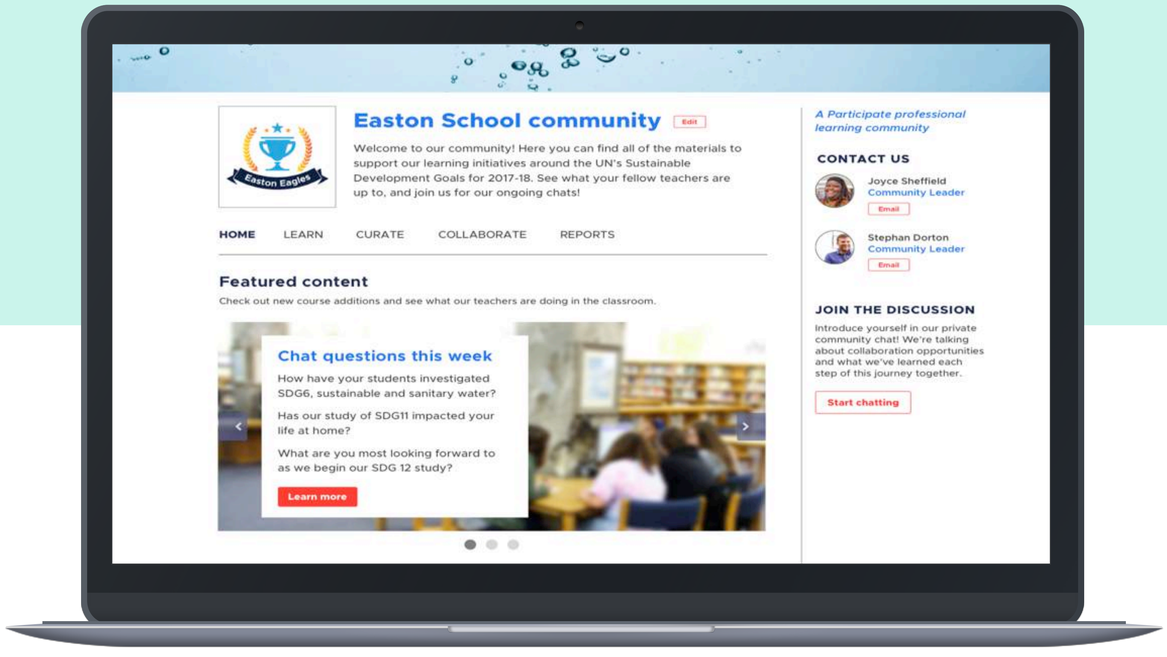
AmandaGriffies@gmail.com

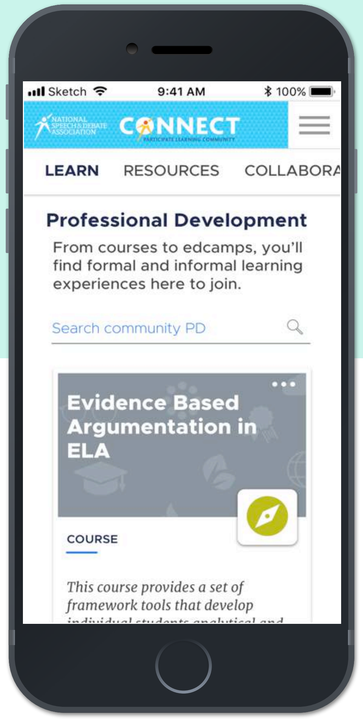
A WORD ON Lenovo

Due to the confidential nature of the projects I have worked on at Lenovo, none of them are represented in this portfolio. However, I can speak to the research methods I've learned during my time at Lenovo. A list of methods I have experience using is below:

- Usability testing
  - Unmoderated remote, moderated remote, and moderated live
- Card sorting
- Tree tests
- Participatory design studies
- Rapid iterative testing
- Surveys
- Benchmarking
- Site intercepts

Participate Learning Community





CONTEXT

Participate is a startup that was acquired by an established company, VIF. The focus of the company is on creating formal and informal opportunities for professional development for teachers. For the Learning Community project and all of my subsequent projects at Participate, I worked on a small team with only one other designer, with whom I collaborated with on nearly every aspect of this design.

RESEARCH

For this research, we interviewed:

- An instructional coach for a Pre-K-12 school
- An IT director for a Pre-K-12 school
- An IT director for a district
- A PD director for a district
- An outreach director and teacher from a national education organization
- A book author and education consultant
- An Edcamp organizer

All of these interviews were done remotely, in a semi-open ended style of interviewing.

RESEARCH

From this research, we developed three personas:

Steve

Susan

Jessica

Primary Persona

Steve is a community outreach lead at a national organization.

Age: 46

Status: Married, 2 Children

Location: Iowa

Bio

Steve is a community outreach lead at a national organization that supports teacher learning through programming, events, and social media. He has 12 years of classroom experience, and 12 years of experience working at nonprofits and private organizations. He has an energetic and driven personality. Steve is very active on social media, especially Twitter and Facebook Groups. His office is understaffed, but he enjoys the challenge of juggling many tasks at once. He loves connecting with others and making teachers feel heard.

Pain Points

- Pressed for time
- Limited staff to market and nurture a community
- Getting buy-in from school/ district administrators to buy his company's professional learning offerings
- Low quality, or no, data on effectiveness of his work

Needs

- Value, Efficiency, Learn from Community
- Connections (both personally and as marketing for his company)
- Strengthen brand and brand awareness
- Help others, Empower teachers Meaningful interactions and data
- Meet people where they are

Values

- Meaningful PD — practical, fast, self-driven, individualized OR communal

Secondary Persona

Susan is a professional development coordinator for a large school district.

Age: 35

Status: Married, no children

Location: Georgia

Bio

Susan is a professional development coordinator for a large school district. Despite the size of her school district, she is only one of two professional development coordinators. She works with a five person team from each school in her district five days a year, but she finds this interaction frustrating as she feels that they are slow and hesitant to change. Despite this, she is making the push towards recognizing informal professional development in her district. Susan wants to connect teachers in her district and encourage them to collaborate instead of compete.

Pain Points

- Works in small department
- Consistant messaging to teachers is a constant struggle
- Teachers who don't initiate seeking out mentors or examples on their own
- Tries to do her best, but is at odds with the other people on her team

Needs

- Communicate quickly and easily with teachers
- Provide more opportunities for teacher-driven PD in her district
- Create a sense of fellowship between teachers in her district

Values

- Consistent messaging — without personnel to deploy to each site, need to focus on consistent messaging
- Purposeful professional learning — clear understanding of why PD impacts student learning and how a teacher can best utilize it to transform students

Tertiary Persona

Jessica is a professional development consultant and published author.

Age: 40

Status: Married, 1 child

Location: California

Bio

Jessica is an author, speaker, and consultant on education technology and professional development. She has authored three books and has a very loyal fanbase. A former educator herself, she loves to help others grow as educators and connect with her followers on a personal level. She wants her fans to feel a connection to her and to each other.

Pain Points

- Communication and marketing to potential students and actual students in the course
- Needs a place to publish courses
- Competing with everything else out there
- Doesn't have the time for complex tools

Needs

- Participating in community, not just building it
- Teacher engagement to drive traffic to her website
- Wants to reach teachers that are interested and want more information about technology tools
- Maintaining control over content, and content timing

Values

- Knowledge-sharing, connecting with other educators
- Develop learners to ask strong questions and setting people up to be independent - Meeting people where they are to provide value to them

For these users, their ultimate need is for a place to **build community** among the teachers they serve.

Out of these three personas, we chose to focus on **Steve** in order to establish user goals.

DESIGN STUDIO

I helped run a product design studio with the Head of UX Design at Participate. The purpose of this studio was to give everyone on our small product development team a chance to give input and help us decide on realistic, achievable feature goals for this product. We even got them involved in sketching features. The team consisted of:

The Platform Product Manager
Four Developers
Two Marketers
Two UX Designers

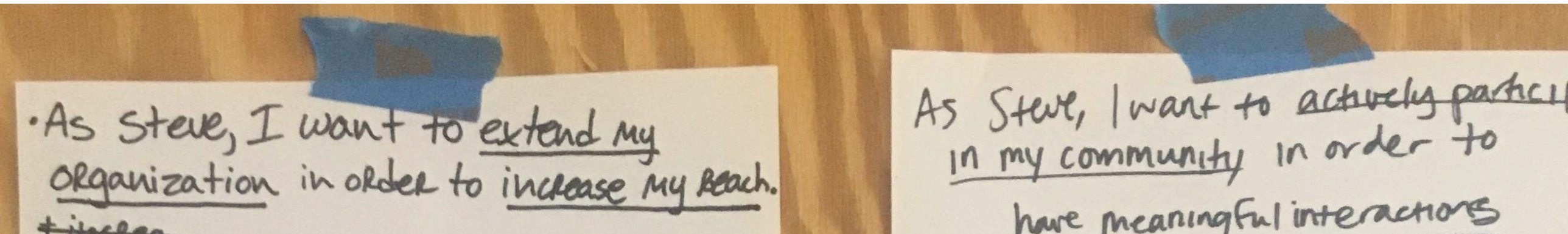
These user goals were the result of our design studio work with the developers.

- Steve wants a desirable, easy, streamlined experience for end users in order to gain credibility, and adoption.

- Steve wants to connect with other members, resources in order to facilitate experience, adoption, and retention.

- Steve wants to control content in order to gain relevance, show expertise, manage his brand, and gain power.

- Steve wants to review, share metrics in order to increase efficacy and increase renewals.



FEATURES

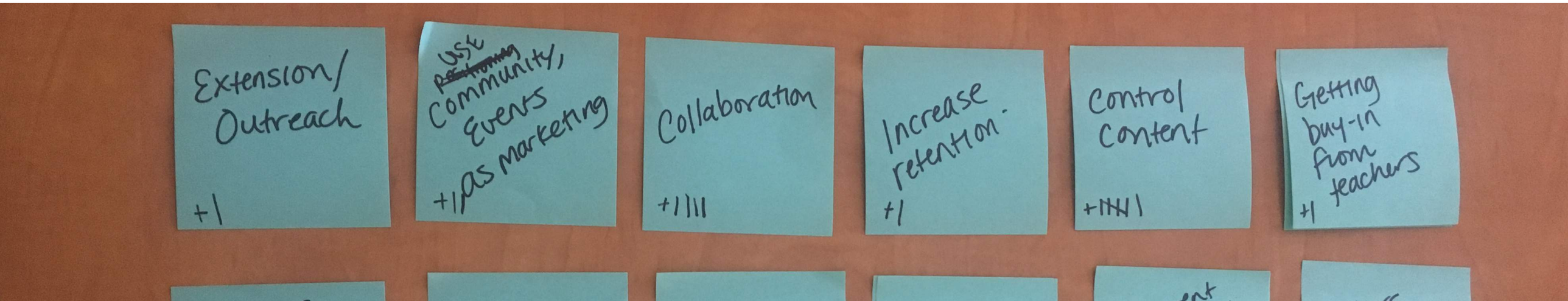
Next, we each wrote features down and voted on the ones we thought should be prioritized. The Product Manager had veto power and ultimate authority on features.

How can Steve control content in order to increase relevance, show expertise, manage his brand and feel powerful?

Feature highlighted content and brandify the community

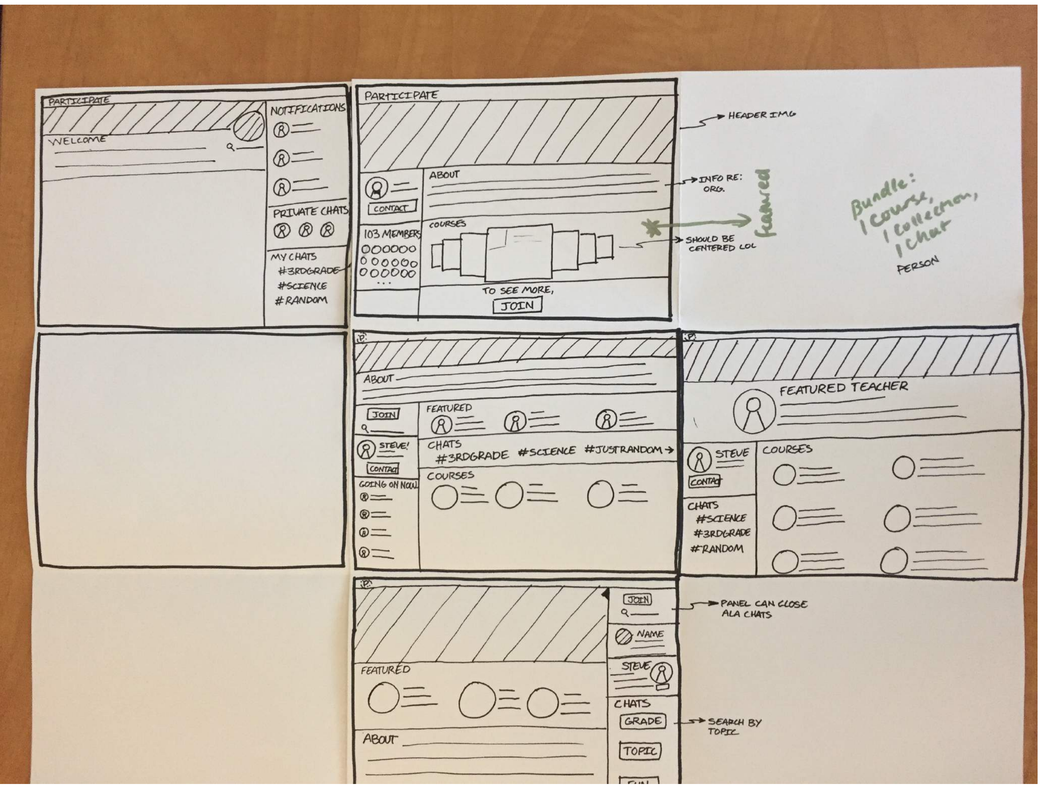
How can Steve connect members with other members and members with resources in order to facilitate the community experience, drive adoption and increase retention?

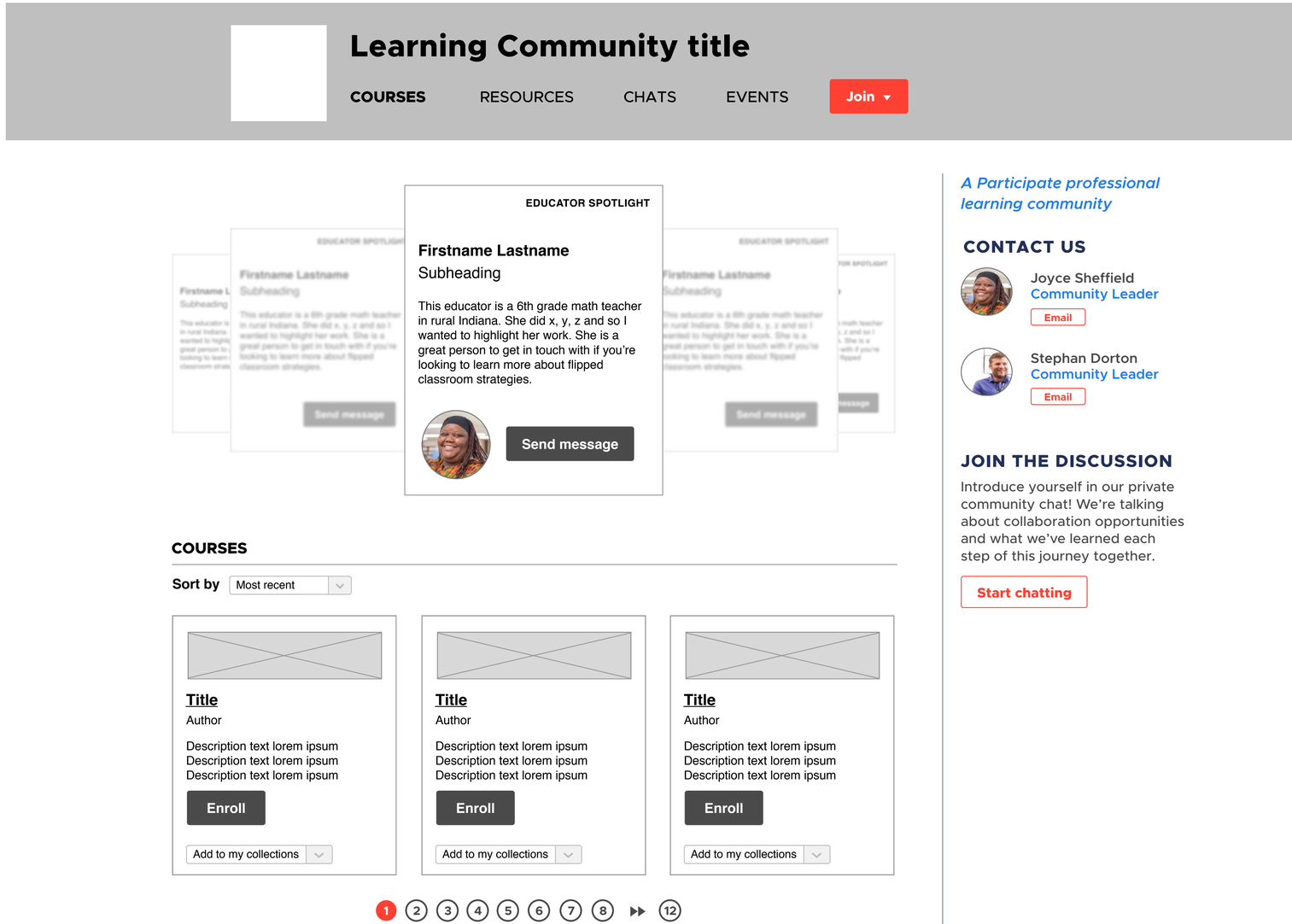
Private/group messaging, search/filter/sort content, and connect with others



WIREFRAMING

The next step in the proces was wireframing.





HI-FI PROTOTYPES

participate. Teach in the USA Become a stronger educator Transform your school Blog Sign up Log In

NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE

National Speech and Debate Association Community

Welcome to the National Speech and Debate Association's professional learning portal. Here you can find all of the materials to support our learning initiatives. See what your fellow teachers are up to, and join us for our weekly chats!

START HERE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COLLECTIONS Join

Start here

EDUCATOR IN ACTION
Susanna Ramsey
8th grade social studies
Check out Susanna's collection of teaching a world water day lesson in action! She has her lesson plan and video of several activities available.
TAGS: SDG, water, world water day, 8th grade, social studies
View

COURSE SPOTLIGHT
Big Questions Debate
Author: NSDA
High school and middle school students will grapple with complex worldview questions as they debate both sides of the topic: Science leaves no room for free will.
TAGS: big questions, debate
Learn more

EDUCATOR IN ACTION
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8th grade social studies
Check out Susanna's collection of teaching a world water day lesson in action! She has her lesson plan and video of several activities available.
TAGS: SDG, water, world water day, 8th grade, social studies
View

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Joyce Sheffield
Connect

Stephan Dorton
Connect

see all community members

GET STARTED

Introduce yourself in our private community chat! We're talking about collaboration opportunities and what we've learned each step of this journey together.

Start chatting

COMMUNITY TAGS

NSDA, speech, debate, competition

HI-FI PROTOTYPES

Professional learning

Search professional learning *all types*

Sort by Most recent

SUBMIT YOUR OWN

Submit your own professional learning experience

Author: You!

TAGS: personalized learning, growth mindset

Learn more

COURSE

Big Questions Debate

Author: NSDA

TAGS: debate, big questions

Learn more

COURSE

Getting Started with Twitter

Author: Evolving Educators

TAGS: twitter, growth mindset, on-demand

Learn more

EDCAMP

NSDA Meetup

TAGS: growth mindset, sponsored event, face to face

Learn more

CHAT

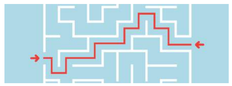
#NSDAChat

Moderator: @SciTeacher

TAGS: twitter, chat

Learn more

COURSE



Collaboration: Together We Can Do So Much

Author: P21

TAGS: collaboration, p21, 4cs, on-demand

Learn more

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 ▸▸ 12

Resource collections

Search community collections

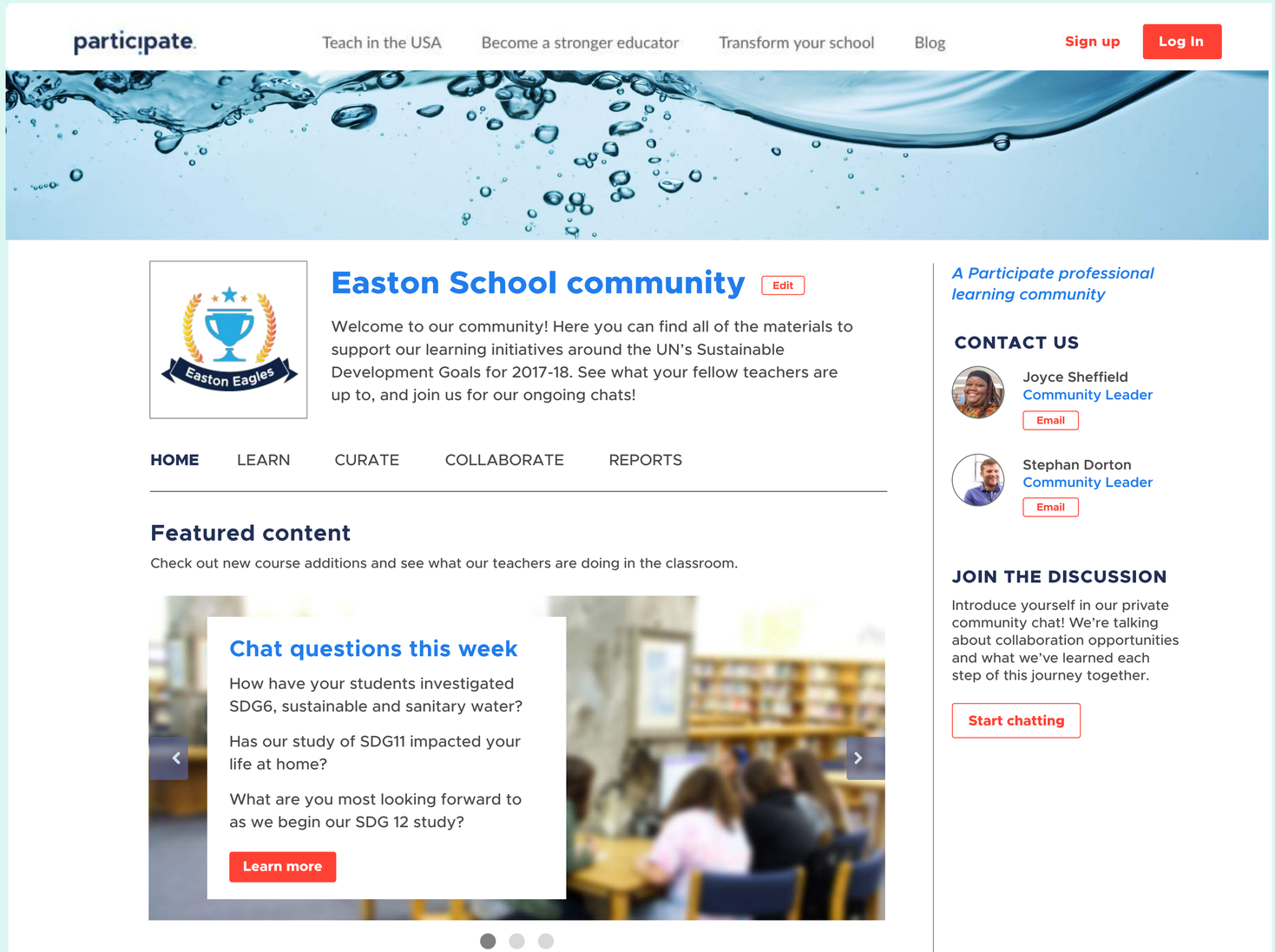
Sort by Most recent

NSDA Rules and Regulations | July 1, 2017
This collection contains the official rules and regulations of the...
Open

Big Questions Debate Prep | June 31, 2017

FINAL DESIGN

Live site:
https://www.participate.com/organizations/Participate:-Learn-Without-Limits/51b87736-93a3-44f1-bd58-a79588aa1ee7



FINAL DESIGN

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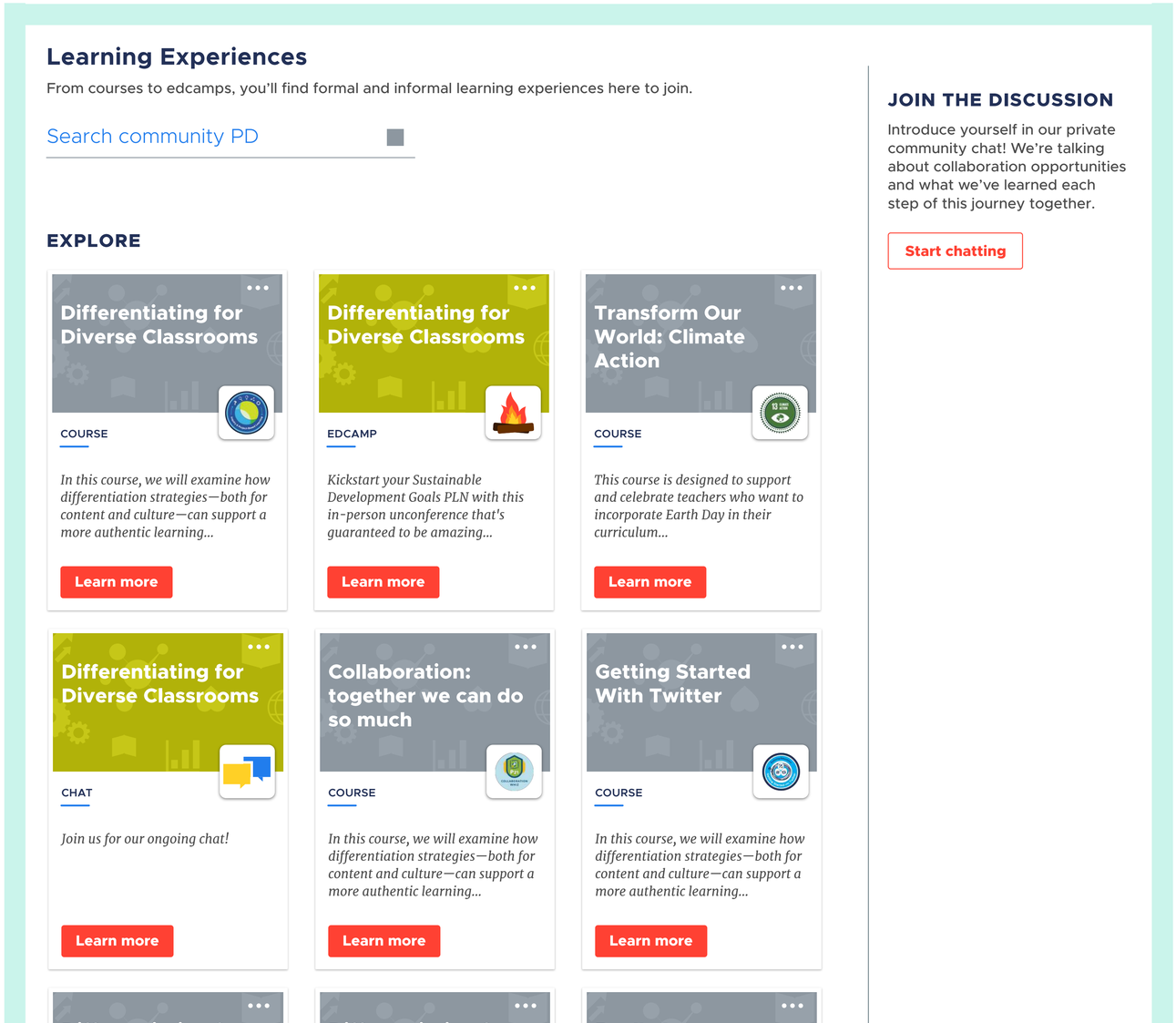
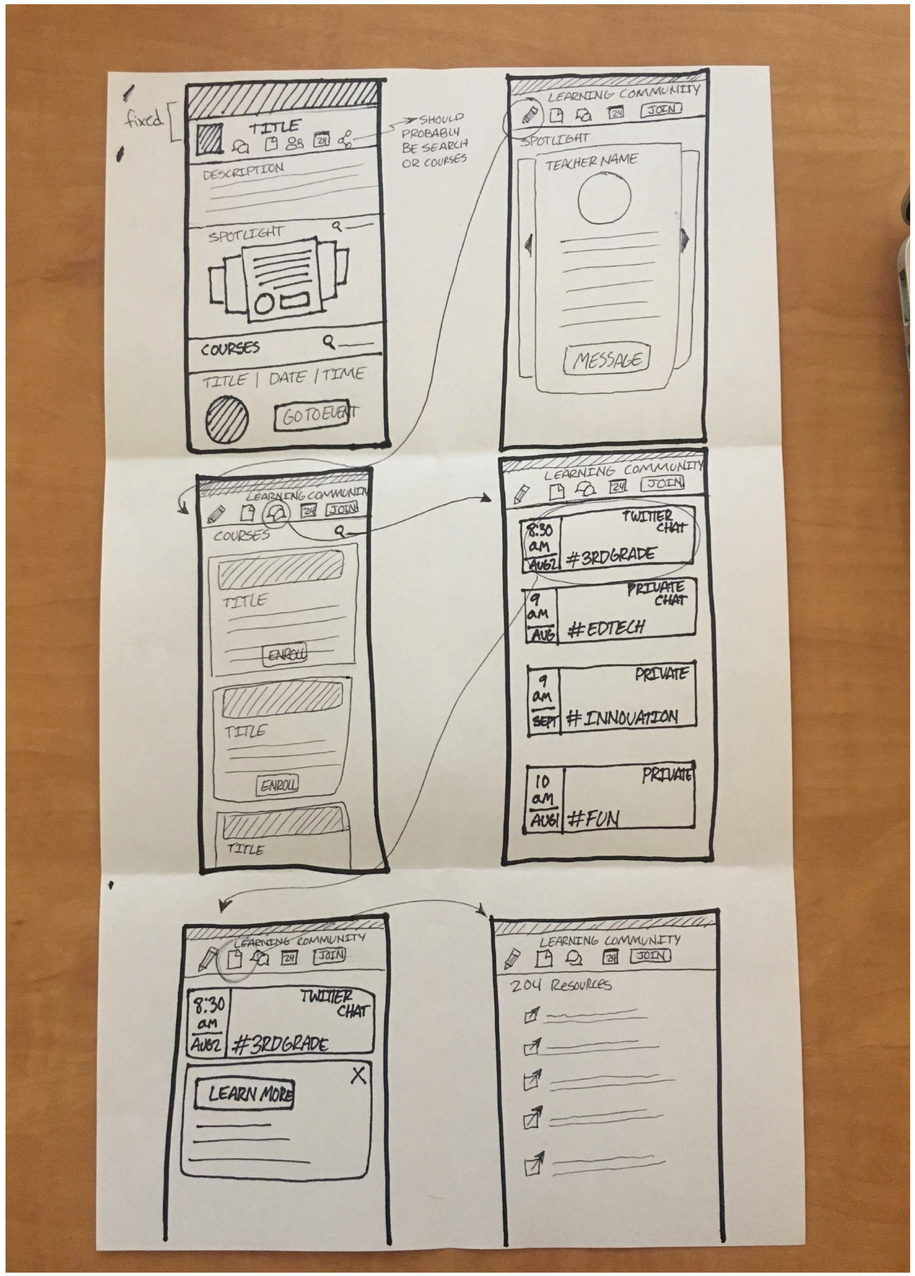
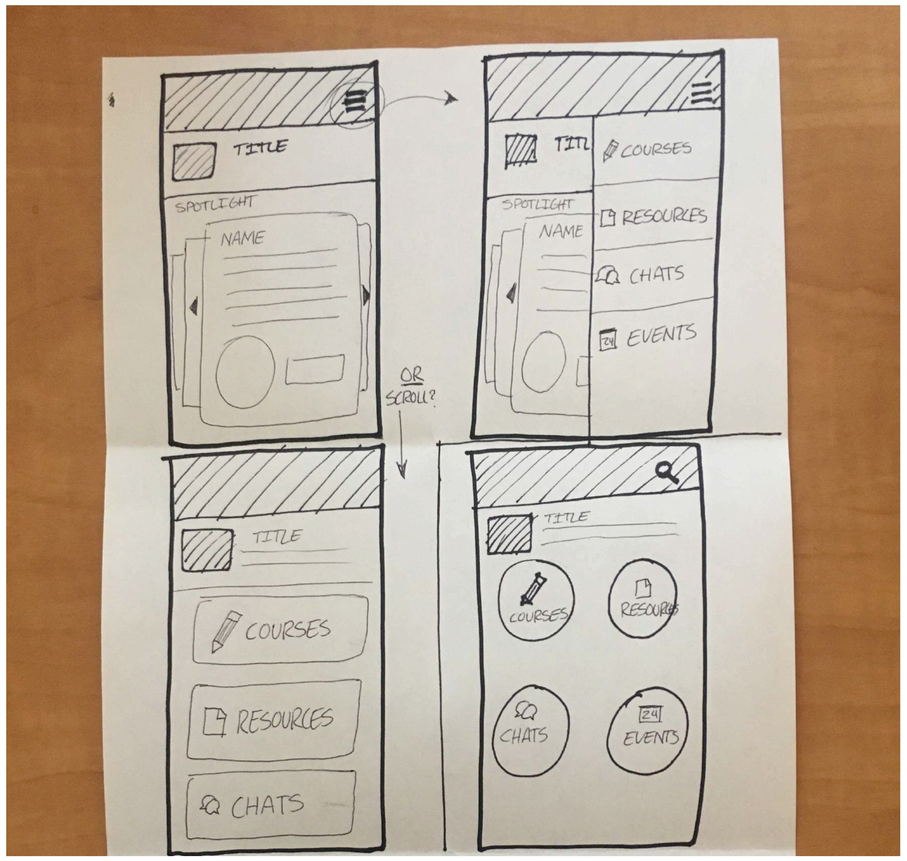
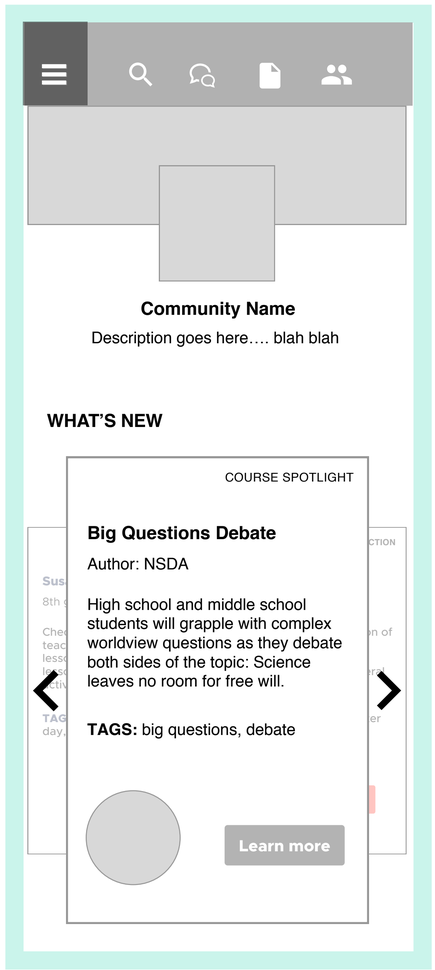


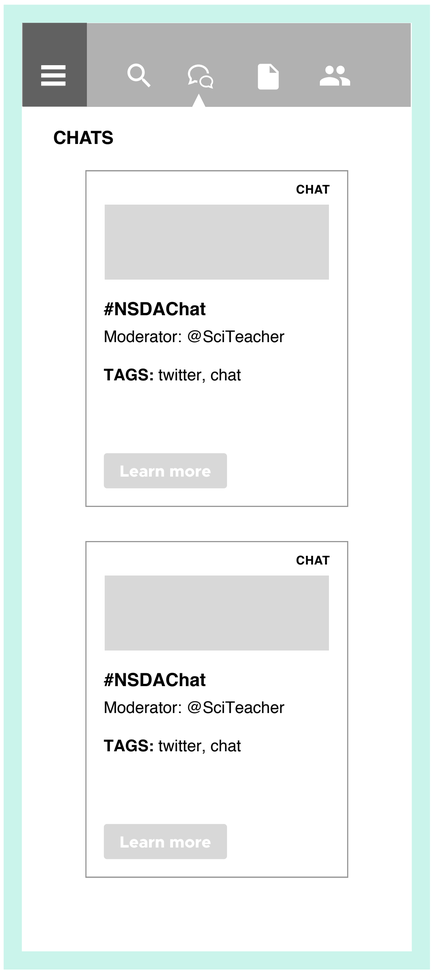
MOBILE SKETCHES

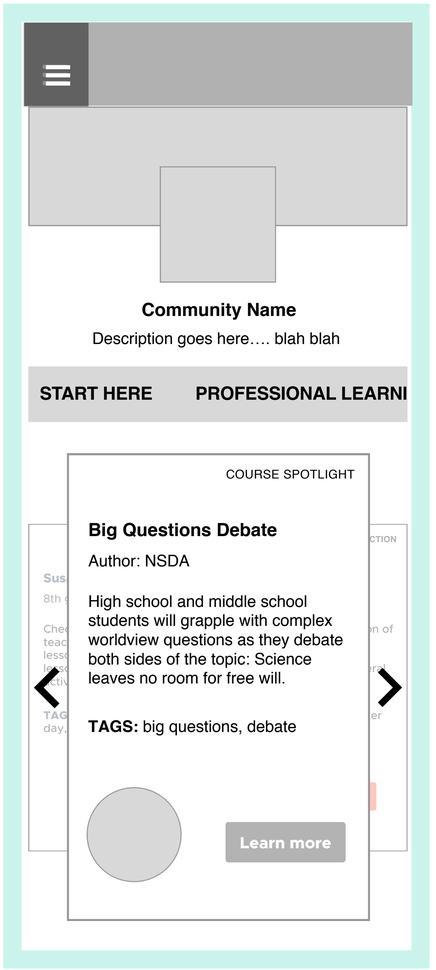




MOBILE WIREFRAMES







MOBILE FINAL VISUAL DESIGN

Live site:
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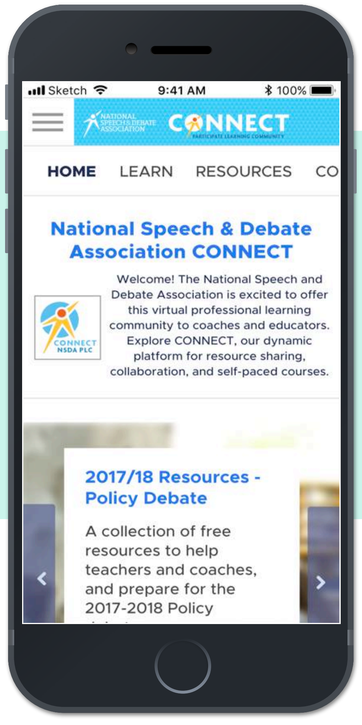
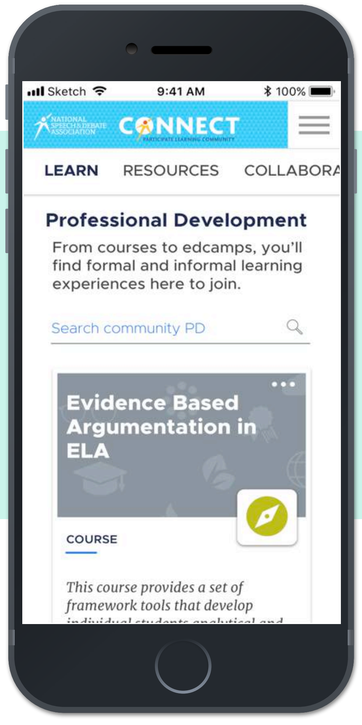




IN CONCLUSION

For Steve, Susan, and Jessica, a learning community is a place where the teachers they serve can come to connect with others and feel less isolated. **It is a place where they can learn and grow together**.

Twitter Chats Moderator Research

WHAT IS A TWITTER CHAT?

A Twitter Chat is pretty much what it sounds like- a chat hosted on Twitter for people around a specific topic. These can be held at a specific time or can be a "slow chat," which is an ongoing chat.

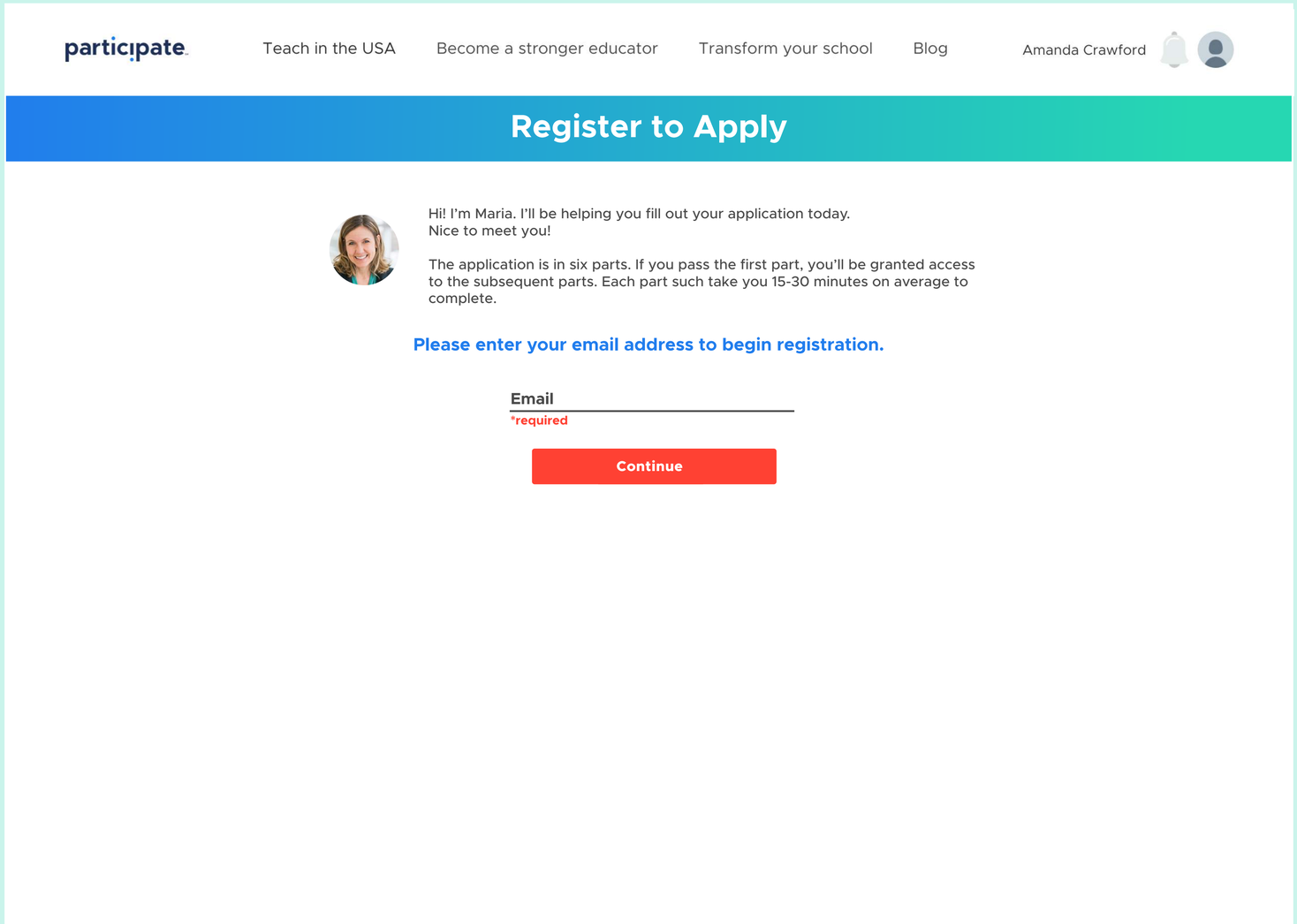
RESEARCH

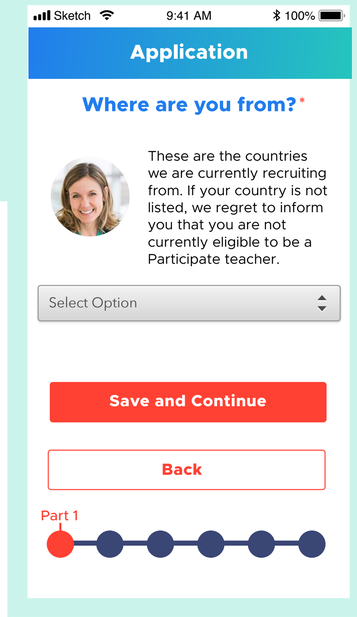
We interviewed ten twitter chat moderators in this design research sprint. The interviews were open ended and qualitative in nature. From these interviews, we created a mental model to show the process that a twitter chat moderator goes through.

Mental Model Twitter Chat Moderator

	Pre-Chat													In-Chat									
	Pick Time	Choose Topic	Some will find guest or co-moderator	Research topic	Write questions	Iterate on questions with collaborators	graphic cards	Write own answers	Promote Chat	Schedule tweets	Set reminders	Eliminate distractions	Setup devices/ workspace	Greeting	Intro Question	Own Answer	Acknowledge contributions	Respond to notification	Facilitate conversation	Timely Reply	Greeting new participants	Post resources	Post second Question	Address potential conflict sparking replies.
Actions	Researching other chats that could be competing with theirs.	Impromptu or crowdsource or out of in person conversations.	Connecting with people at conference, on twitter, or they are a SME.	Organic online research, tapping into professional learning network.	Think about what will be inspiring and spark a dialogue.	connecting with collaborator. Scheduling times. Collaborating on topic. Narrowing down. Selecting best ones. 3-10	Find and pic image or meme and use a digital tool to create graphic.	Cleverness around making a question meaningful and fit into 140 characters.	Tagging people, creating promo images, creating media in general. Sending invites to e-mail distribution lists. Finding the right people to promo to.	Writing tweets and picking timing. Scheduling intro tweets and questions and status tweets through a non twitter tool.	Chat time reminders	Most moderators need intense focused time to be able to be effective at moderating a chat so they have a designated area along with not doing it during work hours.	Destop, tablet and phone are standard for most moderators. Get comfortable, settle in for 30-60 minute focused time	Set the tone and format guidelines for the chat. Welcome messages. Acknowledging people as they arrive. Recognizing return visitors. Create sense of welcome and comfort.	Send tweets. These are auto scheduled	If there is not enough participation in a chat moderators will post own answers. It also happens to direct and pivot conversation.	Liking, retweeting, following users back. validating and encouraging participants	Desktop, phone or tablet. Easier to keep track on multiple devices and also there is a lag on desktop vs phone sometimes.	Staying focused and listening for cues. Developing a leadership skillset and open mindset to stay positive and productive.	Noticing them with a heavy flow.	Noticing participants entering chats and noticing new participants.	Pull resource. Tag it and respond to appropriate participant and / or question.	This is auto scheduled	There is a spectrum of trouble make some are we intentioned others are tr intentionally causing conf The moderat has to make call.
Tools	Participate and EDU Calendar		Twitter, e-mail. In person at conference.	google, books, wikipedia, blogs	Google docs. Graphic cards.	Google docs, hangouts, skype, voxxer and e-mail	Canva, photoshop, Acrew	Google docs, pen/paper	blogs, facebook, twitter, podcast, facebook events, flipgrid, google hangouts	buffer, tweetdeck, participate	google calendar, facebook events, twitter, buffer, tweetdeck, participate		devices, couch	twitter, tweetdeck, hootsuite, participate	Buffer, tweetdeck, hootsuite	twitter, tweetdeck, hootsuite, participate							
Note	To ensure there is minimal conflicts with competing chats.	Happens up to one month in advance can be a **Painpoint**	Mainly digital but occurs in person through conferences.		Specific, not broad. Engaging and inspiring dialogue. **Painpoint** because of requirements (length, goals of question, richness of topic)		Some have students create art. Could be a **painpoint** depending on knowledge/acces ss to images and tools	A question that is designed to encourage dialogue and keep a flow going.	Challenge is finding the right people to promote to. Tagging people was a **painpoint** (Twitter limitation)	important to verify that tweets are actually scheduled / go out at expected time **painpoint** with this is inability to schedule tweets to the second (in buffer, tweetdeck, you can only schedule tweets by the minute.. so no concept of 30 seconds between tweets)	Weeks in advance - the day off.	get kids to bed, lock husband and dog in the other room	notifications are flying in, there can be lag on desktop, wifi can go down **painpoint** in the sense that they are using workarounds and have become accustomed to using multiple devices and tools during the chat	Explaining ground rules and setting expectations for how to run chat.			**painpoint** because they feel like they need to acknowledge everyone in the chat and it can get overwhelming, all messages are treated equally, unclear who has been acknowledged and who hasn't	**painpoint** in the sense that they are using workarounds and have become accustomed to using multiple devices and tools during the chat	Keeping the flow going. Keeping people engaged and on topic. Checking personal biases	It's hard to keep track because of the influx of replies. Also it's hard to do both keep the chat window open while responding to notifications. **painpoint**	**painpoint** because they feel like they need to acknowledge everyone in the chat and it can get overwhelming, unclear when people join what happens when someone is just lurking and may not want to be acknowledged?	**painpoint** — could depend on what you have available and the way that you find resources, and when you're finding them. In the moment, it is difficult to find a resource to share.		consider the nuance of hc this is a **painpoint** or not... the ide managing conflict versu blanket delet or blocking. What role ca the communi play?
Beliefs	**Community building, connection, inspiration, growth. Empowering teachers as leaders. Helping others learn and empowering them.**																	Developing deeper relationships and encouraging dialogue.	Need to model a positive example. Making deep connections.	replying is key to deepening connections and validating participants' experiences				Keep the conversatons positive and productive.
Feelings	***Excitement***								***Anxious and need to focus***								Overwhelmed, sense of duty, Excited that		Impactful, Empowered, making a	Overwhelmed				Could create tremendous stress

Participate Admissions





CONTEXT

Participate does not only consist of an online platform. The company that acquired Participate, VIF, has been recruiting international educators and sponsoring them to teach in the USA for over 30 years. The two companies merged in 2017 and VIF rebranded as Participate.

I was given the opportunity to lead the redesign of the admissions form for international teachers to teach in the USA. This project was a mixture of visual design and content strategy, with a focus on making the admissions process as painless as possible for the user.

INITIAL RESEARCH

Application completion rates

Registration invited to Application submitted: 66%
(Q3 2016 to end of Q1 2017 withdrawal rate = 44% = 2980 applicants)
(last year rate was 46% and the year before it was 42%)

Open rates on registration emails

App invite email #1: open rate 75%
Email reminder #2: open rate 41%
Email reminder #3: open rate 31%
Email reminder #4: open rate 30%

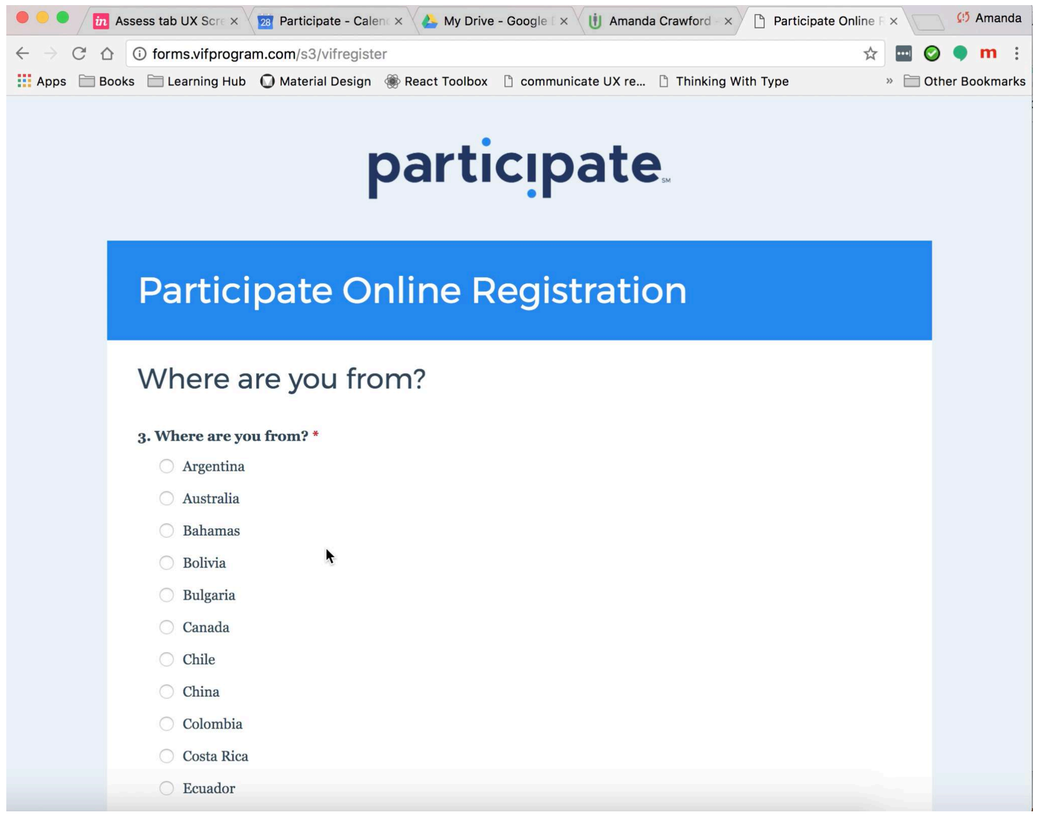
Drop off in application process

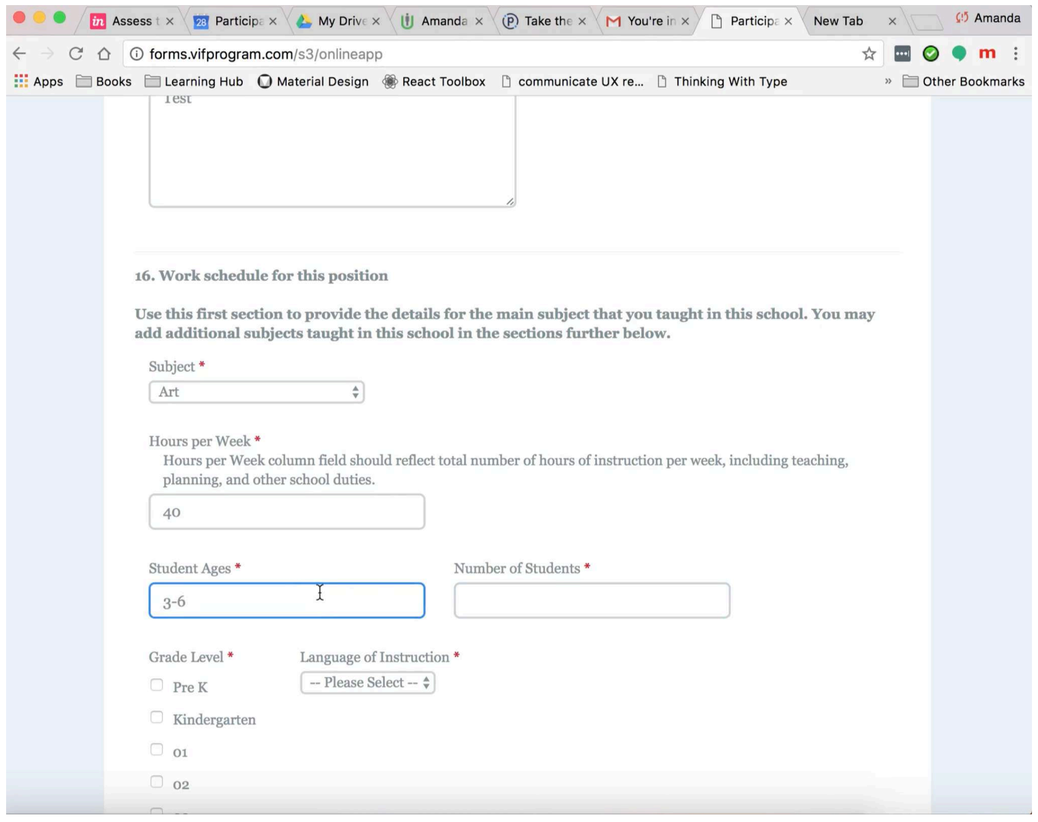
Since January 1, 2015, to June 27, 2017 - there are 4,074 records of people who started the application but did not finish it.
In the same time, we had 12,446 applications submitted.

INITIAL RESEARCH

In order to begin redesigning the form, I first began by recording a user completing the current version of the form.

I found that each page asked too many questions (causing a high cognitive load on the participant), the questions formats were often strange, and the overall layout did not match our branding. This caused participants to become skeptical of the site's legitimacy. Additionally, the length of the form and technical nature of the questions caused the users (the majority of whom do not speak English natively) to become stressed and not finish filling out the application.





GOALS

Reduce cognitive load when filling out application

Reduce amount of time to fill out application (Target: 30 minutes)

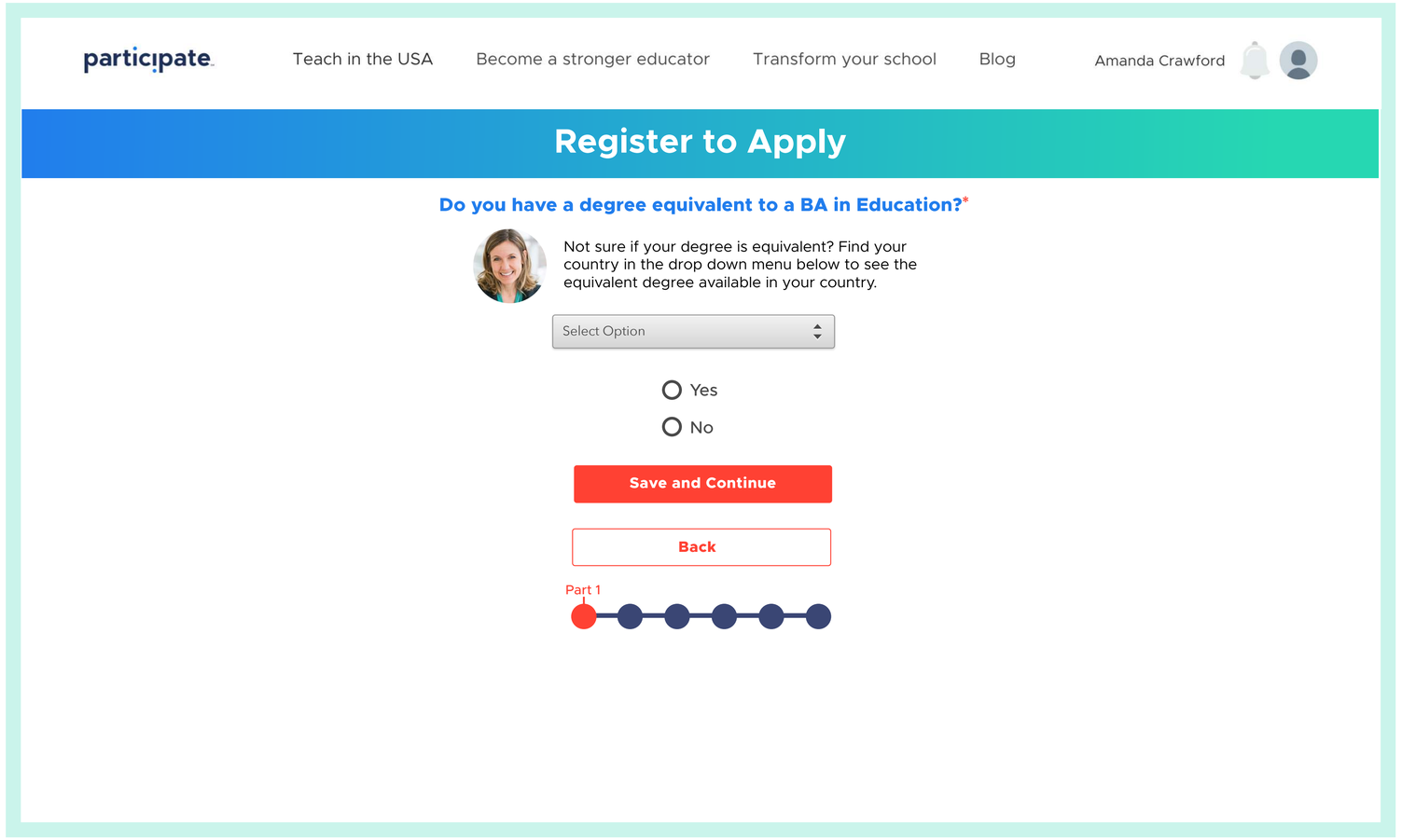
Better User Experience

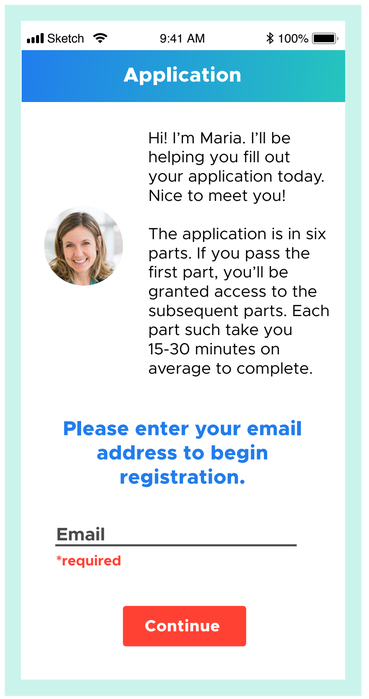
Make sure our approach is clear for non-native English speakers, make sure there are no cultural barriers.

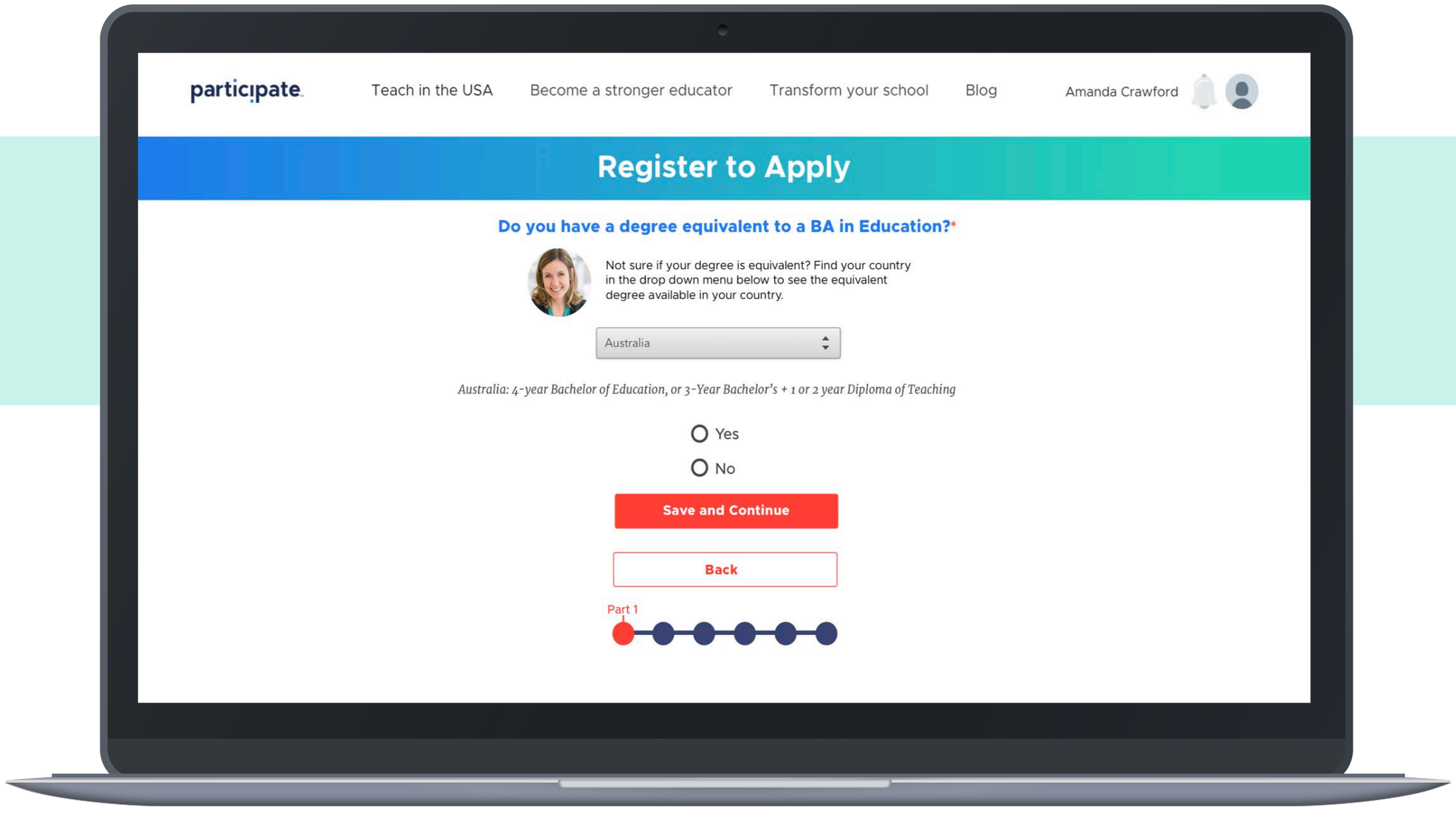
Allow application to work seamlessly on phone.

DESIGN

One of the more significant changes I made to the admissions application was the addition of a person named Maria. Maria serves as a guide to help the user through the application process. She is a mixture of a cheerleader and an advisor. She plays an active role throughout the application process.



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Do you have a degree equivalent to a BA in Education?*
Not sure if your degree is equivalent? Find your country in the drop down menu below to see the equivalent degree available in your country.
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Australia: 4-year Bachelor of Education, or 3-Year Bachelor's + 1 or 2 year Diploma of Teaching
Yes
No
Save and Continue
Back
Part 1

Thank you!

Contact me: 910-585-2107, AmandaGriffies@gmail.com