



TEACHING: LEADERSHIP AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Too often, district efforts to create teacher leadership roles don't last past the pilot phase. This checklist defines key steps to successful, sustainable, and scalable career pathways that strengthen school leadership, accelerate teacher and student learning, and enrich the teaching career.

Define New Teacher Roles that Integrate with Strategic School Designs

New teacher roles must be defined in ways that enable schools to leverage teacher expertise in priority areas and help lead teams to share the work of instruction, respond to student learning needs, and improve their practices.

Must-Dos: Define Teacher Leadership (TL) roles and responsibilities collaboratively, with all stakeholders, aligned to both district and school priorities.

Common Missteps: Schools are asked to implement roles defined in ways that don't match school needs or link to improved learning.

Refine Pipeline and Selection Process

Prepare and select the right people to match defined roles that meet district and school priorities.

Must-Dos: Identify high-potential teacher leaders early in their careers, and give opportunities to practice leadership.

Common Missteps: No clear eligibility, selection criteria, or process.

Manage Performance

Measure performance and student-learning impact of teacher leader roles for the purpose of improving selection and support and recognizing strong results.

Must-Dos: Define measurements of success in the short and long term as part of the design process.

Common Missteps: No evaluation of results, so roles and stipends become permanent and disconnected from contribution.

Support Leaders

Provide support to ensure the success of teachers in their new roles as well as the principals who will manage and evaluate them.

Must-Dos: Create expectation and structures for release time for teacher leaders for their development and contribution to the TL learning community.

Common Missteps: Formal training for teacher leaders nonexistent or doesn't include adult leadership skills, and principals receive minimal training to support these new leaders.

Secure Sustainable Funding

Fund TL roles at scale based on their value and by reallocating: 1) the components of teacher compensation spending and 2) the costs of the roles that teacher leaders offset.

Must-Dos: Define centrally the stipend or salary ranges for different role types, and align amounts to the level of responsibility and expertise required as well as the value of the investments they displace.

Common Missteps: Roles are funded through TIF or other temporary grants without a long-term strategy for sustaining them and without including the cost of release time required for some teacher leader roles.

Adjust Policy and Operations

Stage the process of implementation to ensure that required adjustments are made for support, supervision, union contracts, and expense and payroll systems.

Must-Dos: Systematically review key policy and operational barriers.

Common Missteps: No path for scale is planned for or discussed until the end of the pilot phase.