

Teacher Leadership

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Overview



- What is Teacher Leadership
- Teacher Leader Model Standards
- The Leader Within
- Different but complementary roles (skillset) between educational leaders and teacher leaders
- Small Group Activity: Complementary roles
- Analysis of the process of growing teacher leaders
- Small Group Activity: Distributive Leadership
- Continue with process of growing TL's
- Exit Tickets

Teacher Leadership



- A teacher leader is the quintessential leader who knows and understands the importance of shared leadership, through **creating a culture of collaboration**.
- “Teacher leadership is the process by which teachers, individually or collectively; **influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of the school community** to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of **increased student learning and achievement**.” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004)
- Teacher leaders are **teachers first and foremost**, who typically have no goal of becoming school administrators, instead opting for a career of serving others in the classroom; a commendable life of service to others.

TL Evolution



- In the **first stage**, schools appointed teacher leaders to serve as department heads or master teachers with the emphasis on controlling other teachers.
- **Second stage**, teacher leaders became **instructional leaders** or curriculum developers. These roles set teacher leaders apart from their colleagues and lessened the impact on overall educational enhancement.
- **Third stage**, teacher leaders **worked with peers to improve professional practice** by doing things they might not otherwise do, such as mentoring colleagues, solving school-wide problems, and engaging in professional development.

(Silva, Gimbirt, Nolan, 2000)

Today's Leadership Challenges

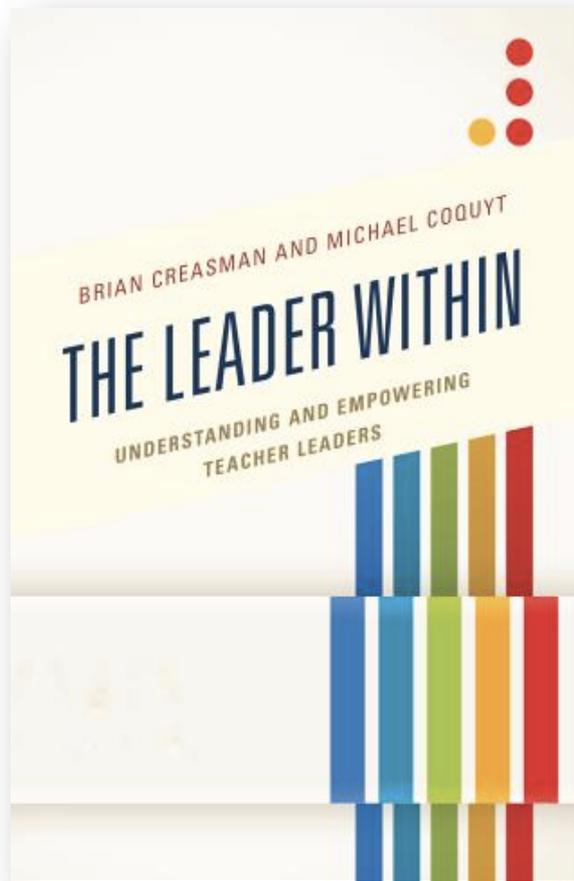


Challenges	Challenges
Standardization	Restructuring, Mergers, and Closings
Increasing Complexities	Shifting Workforce Demographics
Lack of Leaders	Education Uncertainty
Business Models in Education	Increased Regulations
Diversity	Innovation

TLMS



- **Teacher Leader Model Standards developed by the Teacher Leader Consortium in 2008**
- **Domain 1:** Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning;
- **Domain 2:** Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning;
- **Domain 3:** Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement;
- **Domain 4:** Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning;
- **Domain 5:** Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement;
- **Domain 6:** Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community;
- **Domain 7:** Advocating for Student Learning and Profession.



The Leader Within: Understanding and Empowering Teacher Leaders

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Excerpt (Handout)



One of things Brian and I wanted to accomplish with our book was to present the Domains and Functions in a way that practitioners could not only understand them, but relate to them as well. What better way to do this than reflect on what is currently being done in your current educational setting?

- The **Practical Understanding** section is our attempt to explain the function in practical terms.
- The **Notes from the Field** section is our research section. These are vignettes of what is actually happening in the field in relation to a particular function.
- Teacher leaders practice the art of **Self-Reflection** as a means to professionally grow. This section of the book offers practicing and aspiring teacher leaders a place to show an understanding of the expectations for each function.

Excerpt Cont.



- The **Implementation Strategies** section is provided to encourage discussion among teachers in order to align the function with the culture and environment at the teacher's school setting. Teacher leaders need a toolkit of strategies that will assist in effectively leading and creating a culture of shared, distributive leadership within the school or school district. An Example Strategy is provided for the reader.
- The **Continuous Improvement** section provides the teacher leaders an opportunity to evaluate teacher leadership in their current setting – guided by provided questions. This section encourages teacher leaders to think about next steps as it pertains to strengthening teacher leadership in their setting.
- The **Next Steps** section of the book is different than the continuous improvement section in that it focuses on what is needed, additional trainings, and professional learning opportunities to maximize the teacher leader's understanding of each function of the Teacher Leadership.

Excerpt Cont.



- The **Function Evaluation** section allows the teacher leader to put everything together and identify their school's strengths (+) and areas that need improving or additional training needed (Δ). The reflection should focus on priorities and key components that will strengthen teacher leadership in the teacher leader's current setting.

Important to Know the Difference In Skillset



Educational Leaders	Teacher Leaders
School Principal Superintendent/Asst. Supt. Associate/Assistant Principal Dean of Students Athletic Director	Department Chair Subject Leader Grade-level Team Leader Lead Teacher Instructional/Data Coach

School Leadership



Different but Complimentary



Characteristics of High-Performing Schools

Washington Department of Public Instruction

The Role of an Education Leader

The 2011 Interstate School Leadership Consortium Standards

The Role of a Teacher Leader

The Teacher Leader Model Standards

Different Roles and Responsibilities (Handout)



Effective School Characteristic No.1: Clear and Shared Focus

Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.

The Role of an Education Leader	The Role of a Teacher Leader
<p><i>An education leader develops the capacity for distributed leadership (ISLLC 2011 3d)</i></p>	<p><i>A teacher leader utilizes group processes to help colleagues work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change (TLMS 1a)</i></p> <p><i>A teacher leader serves as a team leader to harness the skills, expertise, and knowledge of colleagues to address curricular expectations and student learning needs (TLMS 4d)</i></p>

Different Roles Responsibilities



Effective School Characteristic No.2 High standards and expectations for all students

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

The Role of An Education Leader	The Role of a Teacher Leader
<p><i>An education leader collects and analyzes data and information pertinent to the educational environment (ISLLC 2011 4a)</i></p>	<p><i>A teacher leader assists colleagues in accessing and using research in order to select appropriate strategies to improve student learning (TLMS 2a)</i></p>
<p><i>An education leader monitors and evaluates progress and revises plans (ISLLC 2011 1e)</i></p>	<p><i>A teacher leader facilitates the analysis of student learning data, collaborative interpretation of results, and application of findings to improve teaching and learning (TLMS 2b)</i></p>
<p><i>An education leader builds and sustains productive relationships with community partners (ISLLC 2011 4d)</i></p>	<p><i>A teacher leader uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages in the school community to promote effective interactions among colleagues, families, and the larger community (TLMS 6a)</i></p>

Handout



- **Group:** Read through the Handout and identify 3-4 (complimentary) roles that exist in your school/district.

Process of Growing Teacher Leadership



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Growing Teacher Leaders: **A Process**



Process



- Realize importance of Teacher Leadership
- Recognize that leadership is a teachable skill (or) a skill that can be learned.
- Recruit – realize that some do need to be recruited
- *Build – start small*
- *Nurture – they are going to need assurances and assistance*
- *Empower – let them loose*
- Professional Development – not the same as administrator (educational leadership)

1- Realize



- Teacher leadership is critical in all schools. **Schools are just too complex today not to have some type of collaborative leadership construct.** Through teacher leadership, school administrators empower teachers to play a role in leading the school, facilitating change, engaging stakeholders, empowering others to lead (TLMS). **By enabling teacher leaders to be a part of the collaborative leadership constructs, the complexities that confront education can be alleviated.**
- “Schools that fail to empower teachers to be leaders or to grow a culture of teacher leadership will continue to struggle to meet the needs of students.” (Larry Coble)

Our Work (Epiphany?)

- From our world's best workforce compliance, student handbook, staff handbook, curriculum creation, PLC's and Technology Initiatives we need our teachers to step up and help with the decision making process and running of the school. It wasn't a moment, it is a constant reality.
- I have worked across a number of settings and I realized that building the capacity of staff to see themselves as leaders and part of a team enabled greater learning and engagement across schools.

Distributive Leadership Handout



Group: Teacher Leadership: Distributive Leadership

The actual practice of teacher leadership takes on the appearance of a distributive or democratic leadership model. Spillane, Hallett, & Diamond (2003) explains it as, “how leadership practice is distributed among positional and informal leaders as well as their followers” (p.16). Carr (1997) contends that true distributive leadership can only occur when teachers begin to understand how the school functions beyond the classroom, such as budgeting and scheduling. As you look to grow, strengthen, and empower teacher leaders, **identify school functions that are most important for teacher leaders to understand in order to participate in and become more informed decision makers within the school.**

Identify 5 functions that all teacher leaders should become familiar with. Also, explain why each function is important in a distributive leadership model.

Function	Explanation of Function	Why it is important?
Function 1 -		
Function 2 -		
Function 3 -		
Function 4 -		
Function 5 -		

2- Recognize as Teachable Skill



- Leadership in and of itself may not be a teachable skill, but some of the skills involved in being an effective leader can be taught.
- What characteristics do potential teacher leaders need to possess?
- **Teacher leaders will grow and develop leadership skills through experience** and opportunities to work with and mentor other teachers.
- Our work - Short list: commitment, willingness to learn, passion, interpersonal skills, willingness to be coached/mentored and receive feedback.

Teachable Skill



- At this stage of the game, the principal/ superintendent has bought into the concept of teacher leadership and is asking themselves, “what does it look like, how will it work in my school, who should I go after (which is the big question)...so what skills should they already possess? Another thing to consider is which skills can be learned (or taught) for those individuals that have promise, but lack skills.
- In everything that we have read and are still reading about skills and characteristics...there really is nothing new. There are a lot of skills that various authors believe teacher leaders must possess.

Recruit

- What does it look like, how are you going to make it happen, are you a good recruiter, what needs do you have and who do you have in mind that might be able to handle it, how persuasive are you, are you going to jump at the volunteers or strategically plan out recruiting those that you know are trying to fly under the radar.
- **Our Work:** Typically, teacher leaders emerge with a certain skillset that include the ability to influence others, respected knowledge of teaching and learning, the ability to articulate clearly, and a climate of trust with colleagues. When I recognize these traits, I typically invite the individual(s) to become involved in situations that capitalize on that skillset.

Build – Start Small



- The **Teacher Leader Model Standards (TLMS)** can be a tremendous resource for this phase as well. The standards clearly define leadership positions that can be assumed by teacher leaders. Furthermore, as each state is producing different definitions of teacher leadership, the **Teacher Leader Model Standards provide a universal set of standards that all teacher leaders can utilize**. Our suggestion is to identify opportunities for your teacher leader candidates to:
 - a) Foster a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning
 - b) Access and use research to improve practice and student learning
 - c) Promote professional learning for continuous improvement
 - d) Facilitate improvements in instruction and student learning
 - e) Promote the use of assessments and data for school and district improvement
 - f) Improve outreach and collaboration with families and community
 - g) Advocate for student learning and profession

Our Work



- Administrators need to provide opportunities for teachers to lead and can do so in a variety of ways. Giving them the **opportunity to present in front of their colleagues can be a start**. Also placing them in positions where they can assume more responsibility such as building or district leadership teams. Furthermore, administrators need to share leadership to build capacity and extend the scope of leadership to include nurturing and mentoring teacher leaders.

Nurture - Assist



- Undoubtedly, all leaders face setbacks. It is important that school administrators possess the skills needed to assist teacher leaders in working through obstacles. As leaders, we must realize the challenges, obstacles and setbacks are part of the leadership journey. As we empower teacher leaders to be leaders, we must not abandon them, but be by their side guiding them throughout their journey. Words of encouragement through one-on-one coaching will go a long way with new teacher leaders. School administrators must understand that novice teacher leaders will at times need mentoring and not abandon them to their own devices. In order to nurture leadership, administrators must schedule time to meet regularly with teacher leaders to discuss difficulties that teacher leaders may be experiencing, provide feedback and strategies for success, and in some cases, just listen to them.

Our Work



- Coaching differs from mentoring! The coach suggests, models, prompts...The mentor does the former but envelops the mentee with a "security blanket" of assurances, that missteps and strategies that don't work out first time around are expected and understandable.
- With younger teachers it is a formal process with regular meetings and a formal mentor appointed while in other areas the aspiring leaders will work collaboratively along side an existing leader before taking on the role in its entirety

Empower



Form Community Partnerships

- Today's teacher leaders are seen as leaders by students, teachers, school administrators, parents and community stakeholders. Teacher leadership is extending into all facets of the school community – even into local neighbors and communities. Utilizing their ability to connect with stakeholders, teacher leaders are forming partnerships with local businesses and community organizations that benefit students, the school and the community partner as well. Furthermore, the teacher leaders can educate stakeholders about how two-way partnerships can produce meaningful experiences for students, as well as, economic and societal benefits for local businesses and the community.

Advocate for Students

- The premise behind teacher leadership is and will always be student success. Teacher leaders have a vested interest in making sure that students receive the support and resources needed for a quality education. In a time where the population of students living in poverty is increasing rapidly, students need additional support and resources. Teacher leaders work with local health and community support agencies, as well as, school-based counselors, social workers and health professions to ensure that services are available to students. Additionally, teachers work closely with school administrators to ensure that only teachers who are student-focused are hired. Teacher leaders make sure that focus remains on students.

Advocate for the profession

- Through advocating for students, teacher leaders also advocate for the teaching profession as well. Teacher leaders regularly speak to civic organizations, local governmental boards, state boards and even national boards about education and the teaching profession. They also advocate for the teaching profession through the partnerships that they form.

PD



- School administrators resolved to growing teacher leadership realize that teacher leaders will need ongoing professional learning. They (school administrators) assist teacher leaders in identifying professional learning opportunities that will assist them in their leadership development that are aligned to the school's vision and focused on student learning. Furthermore, school administrators look for opportunities that are directly aligned to the professional learning needs of the teacher and are relevant to the teacher's experiences.
- Go to <http://k12teacherleadership.weebly.com/>

Next Steps



- Exit slips (Handout)

Contact Information - email

1. What did you find most useful during the presentation?
2. What have you learned about teacher leadership that you didn't know prior to the presentation?
3. What was least useful?
4. What would you like to know more about?



Thank you for your time

Mike & Julie

