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Information

Professional Services Committee

Update on Discussions Related to Teacher Leadership

Executive Summary: This agenda item provides an update on discussions and activities taking place at both the national level and in other states on the topic of teacher leadership.

Recommended Action: For information only

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Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs

December 2009

Update on Discussions Related to Teacher Leadership

Introduction

This agenda item provides an update on activities occurring recently on the topic of teacher leadership.

Background

In October 2008, Commission staff presented an agenda item introducing the concept of a third tier teaching credential, including an explanation of the origins of the concept and a discussion of several issues raised in a brainstorming session held with stakeholders (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2008-10/2008-10-2F.pdf>). That agenda item indicated that this topic had come to the forefront in recent years in part due to the statewide increase in the use of experienced teachers as mentors, support providers, master teachers, teacher leaders, and providers of professional development services to other teachers. This increased use of the knowledge, skills and abilities of experienced teachers as peer developers and supporters has come in large measure as a result of programs such as induction and internships, as well as local efforts to improve teacher quality in order to improve student achievement. Each of these types of efforts and activities require and/or rely heavily on peer support and development services. Questions have been raised as to whether teachers are appropriately recognized, prepared, and/or compensated for these types of roles with the existing teaching credential structure. Some stakeholders at both the stakeholder conversation with staff and at the Commission meeting indicated concern about formalizing a third tier in the credential system, questioned the need for an additional authorization for individuals in these roles, warned about the proliferation of credentials, expressed a desire to maintain flexibility of staffing at the school and district level, and indicated that any effort to move ahead with the concept was ill-timed given the current budget situation in the state.

After discussion at the October 2008 meeting, the Commission requested further information on the topic and directed the Commission staff to continue exploring the issue in ways it deemed appropriate. In order to respond to the Commission's directive and be sensitive to the budgetary constraints of stakeholders, Commission staff has refocused its exploration of the topic of a third tier credential to the broader issue of teacher leadership in the light of a number of discussions on the general topic taking place at both the state and national levels. Because of the significant activities that are occurring on this topic it is appropriate to bring additional information to the Commission at this time.

ETS Invitation to Participate in Building Teacher Leadership Model Standards

In summer 2009, the Commission learned that the Educational Testing Service (ETS) had been discussing the topic of teacher leadership in great detail with a small group of educators. The origins of the effort came from work with the Kansas State Department of Education which had recently adopted the Kansas Teacher Leader Standards (Appendix A).

ETS expanded the group to include representatives from additional stakeholders, including state teacher certification agencies. ETS invited the Commission to attend the August 2009 meeting

of the group, which was the first meeting of the expanded ETS group. Commission staff also attended the November meeting of the ETS group. The participant list includes universities, teacher leaders, administrators, members of both major national teachers unions, and organizational representatives such as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the Center for Teaching Quality, the National Staff Development Council, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Education Commission of the States. Ten state agencies are currently involved in the discussions: New Jersey, Kansas, West Virginia, Georgia, Oregon, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Arkansas, and California.

ETS described a move towards teacher leadership as one that may assist in many of the following areas:

- Providing teamwork and support for both beginning and veteran teachers
- Providing professional opportunities that include leadership opportunities
- Cultivating a largely untapped resource for change and improvement in schools
- Keeping good teachers in the classroom
- Benefiting students
- Providing principals with much needed assistance

Early in the discussions, the original ETS work group agreed that there are major differences between effective teachers and what it envisioned as a “teacher leader.” While the effective teacher and the teacher leader share many overlapping characteristics, the focus of the role of the teacher leader would be to work, in concert with the administrators at a school site or district, with his or her peers to maximize the teaching potential and effectiveness of all teachers. As such, the role of the teacher leader must assume additional responsibilities such as building capacity within his or her colleagues.

ETS has noted that though teachers often self report performing leadership-like duties within their schools, historically the term “leader” has been reserved for administrative personnel only. In addition, they noted that often, the best teachers are often frustrated that the systems in which they serve provide only a “flat” career path structure. One of the critical agreements the ETS group made early in the process was to make a distinction between an “effective teacher” and a teacher leader.

The charge to the ETS group is to develop model teacher leader standards and to better define what a teacher leader does in the current educational environment. If and how these model standards are used, is left entirely to state agencies, districts, preparation programs and others involved in certification or teacher development.

The ETS effort has taken into consideration numerous new research and policy themes. Among some of the most prominent themes emerging related to the discussions of teacher leadership are those related to adult learning theory, strategies for leading “Gen Y” teachers, and differentiated staffing. The group spent time in the August meeting discussing these emerging areas and their implication for leadership at the school sites.

Using the Kansas Teacher Leader Standards as well as the *Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008* standards adopted by the Council of Chief State School Officers, as a starting place, the group has begun developing draft model teacher leader standards. While the

group's work in the developing the model standards is far from complete, the general areas addressed at this time include:

- adult learning
- facilitating the improvement of instructional practice
- using research to promote opportunities for student outcomes
- professional learning or development
- using assessment and data for systemic improvement
- improving family and community relations

The group at the November meeting developed draft language for inclusion in the standards, which ETS staff is editing for clarity and consistency. ETS plans to seek public comment on these draft standards sometime in December 2009, or early in 2010. As part of an effort to distribute the standards broadly, ETS has asked numerous stakeholders and organizations to share the draft standards with their constituencies and members and to encourage them to respond to the survey instrument. As part of this effort, ETS has asked the Commission to share the draft standards with constituencies in California via the Commission's PSD e-news and other means as deemed appropriate.

The ETS group will reconvene in March 2010 to consider the public comment and make necessary revisions to the proposed standard language. The final version of the model standards should be available in the late spring 2010.

INTASC Efforts

In 2008, the Council of Chief State School Officers, a nationwide organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, working through its advisory committee known as the State Consortium on Educational Leaders (SCEL), revised its model standards for educational leaders, *Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC 2008*. Currently, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, is in the process of updating the INTASC [*Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing, Assessment and Development: A Resource for State Dialogue*](#) (Model Core Standards), which were released in 1992 and are used by 38 states. These model standards are intended to reflect consensus around what a 21st century teacher should know and be able to do. These standards are similar to the *California Standards of the Teaching Profession* (CSTP). On the Committee reviewing these model standards from California is Lynne Cook, CSU Dominguez Hills and current member of the Committee on Accreditation. Commission staff member Terry Janicki also attended the most recent INTASC meeting.

Although not its direct charge, the INTASC group interactions have moved often to discussions about the entire career path of teachers, including their development as teacher leaders. These discussions have considered the possibilities of addressing the instructional needs of teachers in the classroom by individuals who might assume leadership roles that fall somewhat in between that of an effective, experienced teacher and the instructional leadership provided by a school administrator. Research around distributed leadership has been an important component of these explorations. In their independent discussions, the SCEL and the INTASC groups expressed a desire for more joint conversations in and around this topic. As a result, the two groups agreed to continue additional dialogue around these common themes. In addition, the INTASC group,

like the ETS group on teacher leadership, has also been examining the efforts and initiatives around teacher leadership occurring at the state level.

Efforts Occurring in Other States

The idea of formalizing teacher leadership roles is gaining momentum in several states. States are approaching this topic from a variety of perspectives. For instance, some states are interested in exploring teacher leadership as a means for retaining effective veteran teachers while others are viewing it as an important step towards improving student achievement by improving the instructional practice of all teachers. The following summary of teacher leadership efforts in numerous states was compiled by the Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Teacher Leadership Related Efforts in Other States Compiled by the Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

The **Ohio** Leadership Advisory Council created a leadership development framework that stresses a team-based approach to school leadership. The framework calls for “building leadership teams” (BLTs) that utilize shared leadership structures and posits that “high-performing BLTs also provide greater opportunities for teacher leadership inside and outside of the classroom.” Ohio has also explicitly included teacher leadership as part of the state’s professional standards for educators.

Alabama, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, and Ohio and Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College worked collaboratively to develop a comprehensive 14-course university teacher leadership curriculum. Teacher modules are designed for both state teacher certification programs as well as for adding teacher leader endorsements to existing certification. The curriculum focuses on developing an understanding of the whole school, working productively with others, deepening the instructional capacity of colleagues, and leading school improvement.

Georgia, Illinois, and Louisiana all offer optional teacher leader endorsements as part of their teacher certification system along with features such as robust internships, collaborative partnerships, coherent curricula, and purposeful recruitment used to strengthen principal preparation. The endorsements are performance-based and recognize teacher expertise. Typically, building roles do not require the endorsement, nor does the endorsement mandate a pay raise. The endorsements provide an optional career pathway into full school leader certification.

Kentucky is currently redesigning principal preparation programs with well-defined criteria in tandem with teacher leadership programs. The state is leveraging current requirements that all teachers receive a master’s degree in ten years by redesigning the master’s degree programs to elevate all teachers as leaders in the classroom, school, and district. The Kentucky Teacher Internship Program and New Teacher Standards were revised in 2002 with the addition of the leadership standard for new teachers.

Maryland and Massachusetts have partnered with unions to expand the roles of teacher leaders. In Montgomery County, Maryland, a former teachers’ union president led the creation of contracts with expanded leadership roles for teachers in professional and curriculum development as well as in peer review. Unions also supported Springfield, Massachusetts’ adoption of a teacher leader position contract compensated with higher pay than traditional teacher salaries.

Because the Kansas standards are serving as the model for other states as well as the ETS effort, they are included here as Appendix A.

Related Activities of the Commission

The topic of teacher leadership is potentially a common theme in several of the Commission's current endeavors. These are listed below.

- *The Reading/Language Arts Specialist Advisory Committee*
- *The Teaching Mathematics Advisory Panel*
- *The development of the rubric for the CSTP* – The Commission adopted the new California Standards for the Teaching Profession in October 2009. The Commission is currently working with staff from the Department of Education, the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, and stakeholders to develop a “Continuum of Teacher Development (levels of practice) aligned with the CSTP. In describing this continuum of practice over the course of a teacher's path to becoming an effective teacher, the discussions surrounding the development of a rubric that describes that progression may delve into discussions of teacher leadership.
- *The Study on the Administrative Services Credential* – In the summer of 2010, the Commission will begin its study of the Administrative Services credential. Because the issue of teacher leadership is one that necessarily involves a discussion of the current and potential roles of both teachers and administrators and because effective use of teacher leaders requires significant administrative support, the Commission intends to ensure that the work group convened to the study of the administrative services credential include discussions of teacher leadership and how it might assist, impact, change the role of administrators in California.

Next Steps

Commission staff will encourage California stakeholders to respond to the survey on the Model Teacher Leader standards developed by the ETS-sponsored group. The Commission will use the PSD E-news to indicate when the standards are ready for review and encourage stakeholders to provide comment. In addition, Commission staff will attend the March 2010 ETS meeting on the development of the Model Teacher Leader standards at which time the responses of stakeholders will be considered and standard language revised. In addition, ETS has indicated that also on the agenda will be a discussion about efforts in Kansas to develop an appropriate assessment for use in that state.

A further update will be provided to the Commission in Spring 2010 after the ETS Model Teacher Leadership standards are finalized. Staff will seek further direction on this topic from the Commission at that time.

Appendix A
Kansas Teacher Leader Standards
(Adopted by the Kansas Department of Education)

Standard 1: The teacher leader is able to apply strategies of adult learning across teacher leadership activities.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of. . .

- The differences in knowledge acquisition and transfer for children and adults
- Stages of career development and learning for colleagues
- Effective use of individual and group interactions such as collaboration, networking, facilitation, team building, and conflict resolution
- Effective listening, oral communication, presentation skills, and expression in written communication
- Research and exemplary practice on “organizational change and innovation”

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Demonstrates knowledge and skills for high quality professional learning for individuals as well as groups
- Assesses teachers’ content knowledge and skills throughout professional learning
- Fosters mutually respectful and productive relationships among colleagues
- Uses effective communication skills and processes
- Demonstrates the ability to adapt to the contextual situation and make effective decisions
- Demonstrates knowledge of the role of creativity, innovation, and flexibility in the change process
- Improves colleagues’ acquisition and application of knowledge and skills

Standard 2: The teacher leader is able to advance the professional skills of colleagues by demonstrating and applying expertise in observational skills and in providing quality feedback in order to support reflective practice focused on improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of. . .

- Research-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment and their alignment with desired outcomes
- Models and protocols for effective observation and feedback
- Role and use of critical reflection in improving professional practice

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Recognizes, analyzes, and works toward improving the quality of colleagues’ professional and instructional practices
- Uses effective observation techniques to identify opportunities to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Provides observational feedback that demonstrates the intent to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Develops, leads and promotes a culture of self-reflection and reflective dialogue

- Applies mentoring as well as coaching practices to support colleagues' individual and group professional improvement and career development

Standard 3: The teacher leader is able to improve the quality of colleagues' collaboration and interaction with families and other stakeholders.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of . . .

- Child development and conditions in the home, culture and community and their influence on educational processes
- Contextual considerations of the family, school, and community and their interaction with educational processes
- Effective strategies for involvement of families and other stakeholders as part of a responsive culture

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Develops colleagues' abilities to form effective relationships with families and other stakeholders
- Recognizes, responds and adapts to contextual considerations to create effective interactions among families, communities, and schools
- Improves educational outcomes by promoting effective interaction and involvement of teachers, families, and stakeholders in the educational process

Standard 4: The teacher leader is able to initiate and facilitate colleagues' design and implementation of action research and analysis of data for individual and group decision making.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of . . .

- Action research methodology
- Analysis of research data and development of a data-driven action plan that reflects relevance and rigor
- Implementation strategies for research-based change and for dissemination of findings for programmatic changes

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Models and facilitates relevant and targeted action research
- Models and facilitates analysis and application of research findings to improve educational outcomes
- Engages colleagues in identifying research questions as well as designing and conducting action research to improve educational outcomes
- Facilitates the analysis of data for informed decision making to improve educational results with a focus on increased productivity, effectiveness and accountability
- Assists with application and supports dissemination of action research findings to improve educational outcomes

Standard 5: The teacher leader is able to develop and support collaborative teams and promote collegial interactions that improve the effectiveness of practice.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of . . .

- Collaboration, facilitation, team building, and conflict resolution techniques
- Influence of individual characteristics on group interactions
- Structures and processes for collaborative work
- The process of development of group goals and objectives

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Facilitates development of a responsive culture with shared vision, values, and responsibility
- Applies understanding of team members' characteristics to develop collaborative teams
- Guides purposeful collaborative interactions, inclusive of team members' ideas and perspectives
- Promotes team-based responsibility for assessing and advancing the effectiveness of practice
- Creates structures and processes for collaborative teams that promote collegiality and result in improved practice

Standard 6: The teacher leader is able to identify and assess opportunities for educational improvement, and advocate effectively for them within and beyond the school community

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of . . .

- Effective identification and interpretation of data, research findings, and exemplary practices (e.g. Multi-Tiered System of Support)
- Alignment of opportunities with identified needs
- Synthesis of information to support a proposal for educational improvement
- Local, state and national policy decisions and their influence on instruction
- The process to impact policy and to advocate on behalf of students and the community

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Identifies and evaluates needs and opportunities
- Generates ideas to effectively address solutions/needs
- Analyzes feasibility of potential solutions and relevant policy context
- Advocates effectively and responsibly to relevant audiences for realization of opportunities

Standard 7: The teacher leader is able to inform and facilitate colleagues' selection or design, use, and interpretation of multiple assessments, along with other available data, to make informed decisions that improve the quality of instruction and student learning.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of . . .

- Design and selection of suitable evaluation instruments and effective assessment practices for a range of purposes
- Analysis and interpretation of data from multiple sources
- Use of formative and summative data to inform the continuous improvement process

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Informs and facilitates colleagues' selection or design of suitable evaluation instruments to generate data that will inform instructional improvement
- Informs and facilitates colleagues' interpretation of data and application of findings from multiple sources (e.g., standardized assessments, demographics and other relevant sources) to guide instructional decisions and improve educational practice

Standard 8: The teacher leader is able to inform and facilitate the design and implementation of coherent, integrated and differentiated professional development based on assessed student and teacher needs.

Knowledge: The teacher leader demonstrates knowledge of. . .

- Selection and evaluation of professional development resources appropriate to the identified need(s) along the professional career continuum.
- The standards of high quality professional development and their relevance to improved learning
- Application of the concepts of adult learning to the design and implementation of professional development
- Effective use of professional development needs assessment, designs, protocols, and evaluation tools
- The role of 21st century skills and technologies in educational practice
- The role of shifting cultural demographics in educational practice

Performance: The teacher leader. . .

- Accurately identifies the professional development needs and opportunities for colleagues in the service of improving education
- Works with staff and staff developers to design and implement ongoing professional learning based on assessed teacher and student needs
- Involves colleagues in development and implementation of a coherent, systemic, and integrated approach to professional development aligned with school improvement goals
- Utilizes and facilitates the use of technology and media literacy as appropriate
- Continually assesses the effectiveness of professional development activities and adjusts appropriately