

Teacher Leadership: Exploring the Concept and Setting a Standard



Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium



In this presentation...

- Why we need teacher leaders
- Defining teacher leadership
- What is the difference between effective teachers and teacher leaders
- How teacher leaders fit into the education continuum
- Forming a consortium
- Developing domains to define teacher leaders
- Moving forward

“Within every school there is a sleeping giant of teacher leadership, which can be a strong catalyst for making change.” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001)

WHY WE NEED TEACHER LEADERS

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Why do good teachers leave the profession?

- Low salaries
- Lack of support from school administrators
- Pupil discipline problems
- Lack of teacher input into decision making

Source: Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania

What do new teachers say they need?

- Teamwork and support
- Professional opportunities that include leadership opportunities
- Fair pay and a differentiated pay structure that rewards:
 - Outstanding performance
 - Acquiring new skills
 - Assuming new roles and responsibilities

Source: Susan Moore Johnson, Harvard researcher

Why teacher leadership?

- Teaching is a “flat” profession
- Teacher tenure in schools is longer than that of administrators
- Inadequacy of “heroic” views of leadership
- Limitations on administrator expertise
- The principal role is “impossible”

Source: Charlotte Danielson

Why teacher leadership?

- Cultivates a largely untapped resource for change and improvement in schools
- Keeps good teachers in the classroom
- Provides supports for beginning teachers
- Provides principals with much-needed assistance

Benefits Students

Why teacher leadership?

- School improvement reform requires harnessing talent for common goals
- Shared accountability for student achievement
- Role of principal has become more complex and challenging – distributed leadership models
 - Spillane (2001) describes distributed leadership as a means to incorporate the **activities of many individuals in a school who work at mobilizing and guiding other teachers in the process of instructional change**. Spillane, J., Javerson, R., Diamond, J. (2001) "Towards a theory of leadership practice: a distributed perspective," Northwestern University: Institute for Policy Research Working Paper, 2001 .
 - In Sergiovanni's (2001) conception of **distributed leadership, a large number of individuals in a school are involved in the work of their colleagues, trusted with information, participate in decision-making, and have a stake in the success of a school**. Sergiovanni T. (2001), "Leadership: What's in it for Schools?"

DEFINING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

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What is leadership?

“The litmus test of all leadership is whether it **mobilises** people’s **commitment** to putting their energy into **actions** designed to **improve** things. It is **individual** commitment, but above all it is **collective** mobilisation.”

Michael Fullan

Leading in a Culture of Change, p. 9

What is teacher leadership?

“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, p. 287

A Paradox

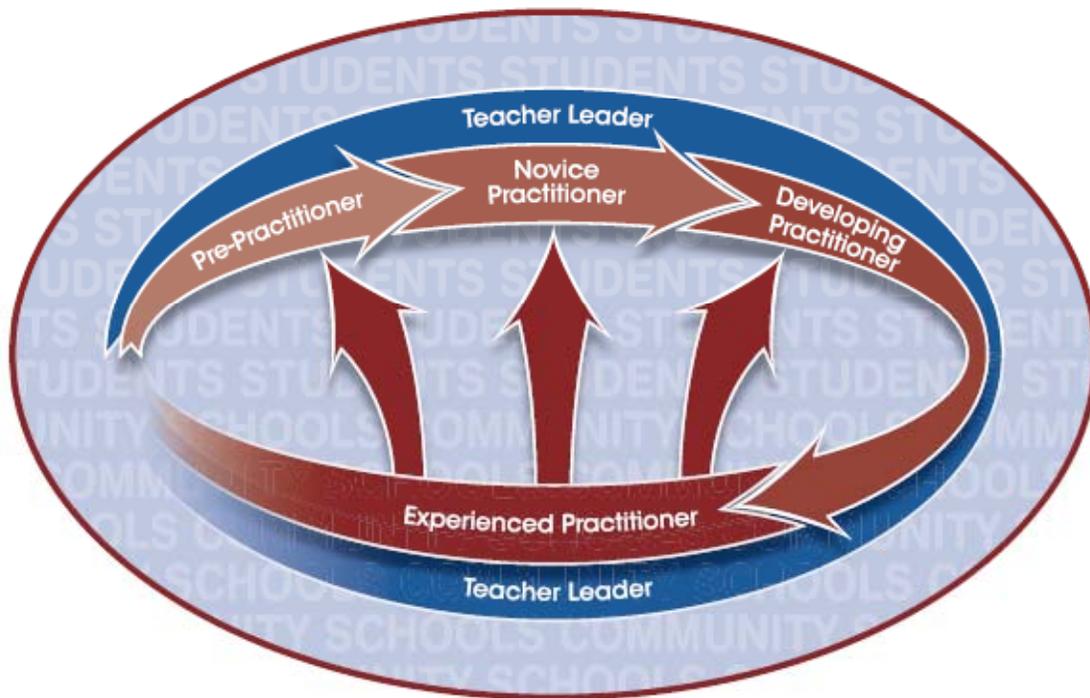
- Though teachers often self-report performing leadership-like duties within their schools, the term *leader* has been reserved for administrative personnel only (Cherubini, 2008)
- Acknowledging the leadership roles of teachers also defies the egalitarian norm of school cultures that all teachers should be equal (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).
- Our best teachers are often frustrated by the systems in which they serve
- Recognized teachers are often not seen as leaders in their own schools or districts
- These teachers often feel 'all dressed up with no place to grow'

Challenges to teacher leadership

- Credibility with teacher colleagues
- Delineation of responsibilities between teachers and administrators
- Finding the right structure

Teacher leadership: is it time?

Continuum of Educator Development



- Human capital management
- Educator talent management
- System of assessments
- System of educator development

What is happening in teacher leadership now?

- **CCSSO five state consortium:** Alabama, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Ohio developed a teacher leader curriculum. Led by Joe Murphy.
- **University programs:**
 - Montclair University developed Master's in Teacher Leadership
 - Virginia Commonwealth University established Center for Teacher Leadership
 - Harvard Graduate School of Education
- **Teaching in Kansas Commission:** Recommended a teacher leader certification and development of teacher leader standards. Certification has been established, standards developed.
- **Other States:** Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana are looking to implement some form of teacher leadership endorsement or recognition statewide.
- **National Board** considering a certificate
- **Ad Hoc:** Professional learning communities movement
- **Teach for America** book on teacher leadership

FORMING A CONSORTIUM

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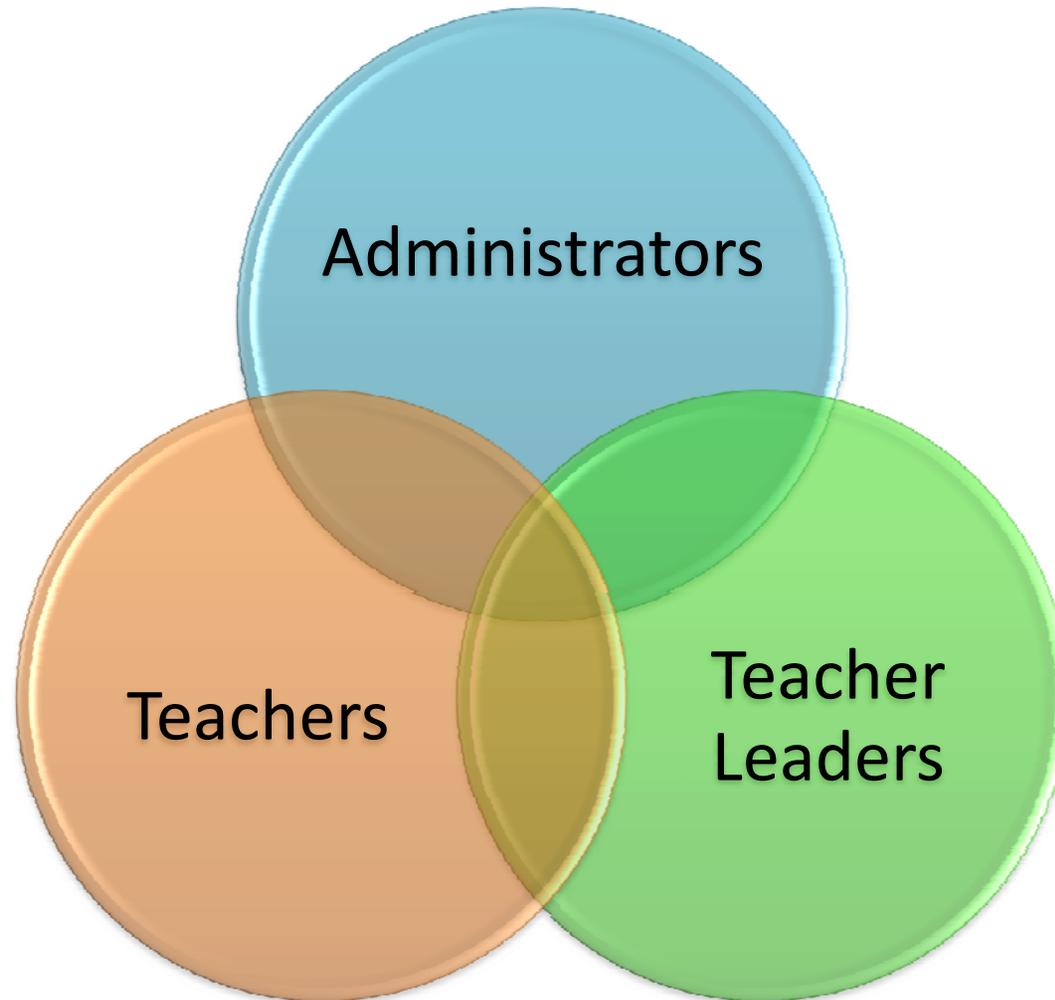
- Organizations
 - AFT, CCSSO, CTQ, Danielson Group, ECS, ETS, LPA, NAESP, NEA, LearningForward
- State agencies
 - AR, CA, GA, KS, KY, NJ, OH, OR, TN, WA, WV
- Teacher Leaders
 - NJ (Stewart), NY (Izzo), TX (Ash, Navarro), WA (Swant)
- Principals
 - NJ (Shine), NY (Gilhuley), OH (Combs), TX (Boyd)
- Superintendents
 - VA (Dale and Butz)
- Institutions of Higher Education
 - Bethel (Jantz), Brandeis (Troen), Harvard (Boles), Montclair (Cutler), Princeton (Catena), Temple (Ramirez), UW Madison (York-Barr), Virginia Commonwealth (Dozier)

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GREAT TEACHERS AND TEACHER LEADERS?

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Where do teacher leaders fit?



Teacher leader differentiators

- Believe transformative capacity of schools
- Aware of research and literature on teacher quality and teacher learning
- Engage in and share action research strategies
- Allow all voices to be heard
- Lead instructional change
- Know how to LISTEN
- Change agents negotiators
- Expert knowledge and confidence to impart to others
- Build capacity in colleagues and systems
- Credibility with colleagues
- Facilitate and support others' learning
- Just as effective with adults as with Ss
- Think 'we' vs. 'I'
- Awareness of effective teaching practice
- See "Big Picture"
- Teaching extends beyond classroom
 - Focus on advancing teaching and learning
 - Lead change through work w/policy makers, practitioners, public
 - Understand audience – specific approach and delivery
- Always forging new ways to enhance education & learning
- Boundary spanner
- Read environment
- Opportunistic
- Build trust/community
- Advance the profession
- Lead by example
- Understand adult learning theory

Some questions raised...

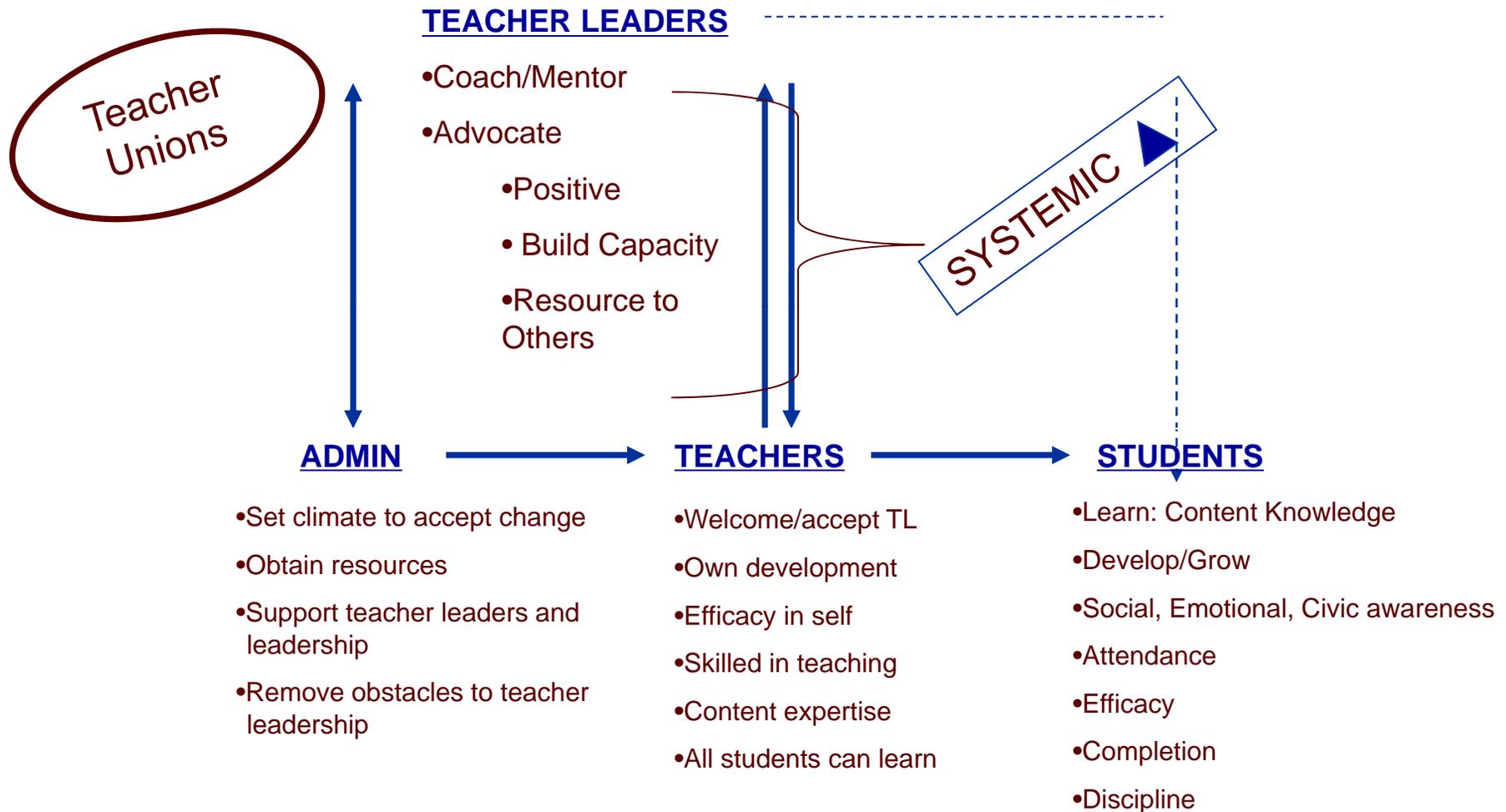
- Do teacher leaders need to be excellent teachers?
- Do teacher leaders need to have their 'own' classroom?
- How do we grow teacher leaders?
 - What professional development needs?
 - What courses are needed?
- How will different states identify teacher leaders? Use teacher leaders? Use teacher leader standards?
- Can all teachers be teacher leaders?

HOW TEACHER LEADERS FIT INTO THE EDUCATION CONTINUUM

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In order to succeed...



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Teacher leader roles: formal vs. informal

Formal Roles

- School leadership team
- Mentor/coach
(instructional, data, etc.)
- Curriculum leader
- Policy or advocacy
- Professional
development provider

Informal roles

- Study group leader
- Committee leader
- Union representative
- Organizer

Teacher leaders in 21st century learning

- Gen Y learners and teachers (TQ Center report)
 - Looking for leadership opportunities from outset
 - Seeking reasons to stay in professions
 - Like to share what they've learned (Wong and Wong, 07)
 - Need to make a difference (Wong and Wong, 07)
- Differentiated staffing roles (Lasagna, LPA report)
- Looking at differentiated pay for **services**
- Examining new models of structuring 'school'

Focused pathways?

- Mentoring and coaching
- Assessment and data experts
- Curriculum experts
- Facilitation and collaboration
- Policy advocates

Identifying Teacher Leaders

Moving beyond “Appoint and Annoint”
(Mark Smylie, 2010)

- Good teacher = good teacher leader myth
- Lack of acknowledgement of skills needed to fulfill leadership role with peers
- Failure to consider the ‘fit’ of the job with the abilities
- Absence of training for the role

How do we grow teacher leaders?

- Standards to define teacher leadership
- College coursework – Master's program, certificate program?
- Online professional development support
 - Teacher development
 - Benchmark assessments
 - Online communities
- License/certification/endorsement/certificate

DEVELOPING DOMAINS TO DEFINE TEACHER LEADERS

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Developing model standards

- Research – what's out there?
 - Adult learning theory and models
 - Facilitation
 - Collaboration
 - Negotiation
 - Cultural awareness
 - Network building
 - Advocacy
 - Role of researcher

Developing model standards

- Examined existing models
 - NSDC (Killion)
 - Danielson
 - York-Barr
- Examined existing standards/frameworks
 - INTASC
 - ISLLC
 - Arkansas: Framework for Instructional Facilitator
 - Kansas: Teacher leader standards
 - Kentucky: Teacher leadership information
 - West Virginia: Teacher standard five
- Conducted survey of teacher leaders

Content needed to move from teacher to teacher leader

- Adult learning models
- Partnerships with peers and administrators
- Communication strategies
- Trust and relationship building
- Organizational Savvy
- Change Orientation
- Balancing advocacy and inquiry
- Coaching, observation and mentoring skills – feedback
- Professional practices
- Change theory
- Education policy
- Analyze the professional practice of one's own and others
- Knowledge of research for teaching and learning
- Facilitation skills
- Cultural competencies across populations

Drafted model standards domains

- **Domain I:** Understanding **Adults as Learners** to Create Communities of Learning
- **Domain II:** Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Outcomes
- **Domain III:** Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement
- **Domain IV:** Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning
- **Domain V:** Using Assessments and Data for Systemic Improvement
- **Domain VI:** Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community
- **Domain VII:** Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession

Public comment

- Collected public comment over four months
- Assembled and analyzed public comment
- Reviewed comments
- Revised domains and functions

Public comment summary data

Domain	% agree - important for TL	% strongly agree – important for TL	% agree domain/description correctly worded	% strongly agree domain/description correctly worded	Comments	% agree functions correct	% strongly agree functions correct
Adult learning	26.6	64.5	44.4	30.5	15.3	38.1	51.9
Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Achievement	33.3	54.2	38.1	33.1	14.6	42.5	46.6
Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement	29.8	58.6	36.2	36.4	11.1	38.8	45.8
Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning	27.7	64.3	37.9	45.8	7.6	39.4	49.2
Using Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement	36.2	49.0	38.6	34.2	10.9	42.3	42.7
Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community	33.6	51.6	37.5	39.4	8.1	39.4	45.1
Advocating for Student	36.2	43.4	37.5	34.2	9.8	38.8	40.5

First iteration standards language

- Domain I: **Fostering** a **Collaborative Culture** to **Support** Educator Development and Student Learning
- Domain II: **Accessing and Using Research** to Improve Practice and Student Learning
- Domain III: Promoting **Professional Learning** for Continuous Improvement
- Domain IV: **Facilitating** Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning
- Domain V: Promoting the Use of **Assessments and Data** for School and District Improvement
- Domain VI. Improving **Outreach and Collaboration** with Families and Community
- Domain VII: **Advocating** for Student Learning and the Profession

Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning

The teacher leader understands the principles of adult learning and knows how to develop a collaborative culture of collective responsibility in the school. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote an environment of collegiality, trust and respect that focuses on continuous improvement in instruction and student learning.

Functions

The teacher leader:

- Utilizes group processes to help colleagues work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict and promote meaningful change;
- Models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning;
- Employs facilitation skills to create trust among colleagues, develop collective wisdom, build ownership and action that supports student learning;
- Strives to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges; and
- Uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures and languages to promote effective interactions among colleagues.
- By colleagues, we mean members of the school community, including teachers, administrators, specialists and others involved in the education of children at the school or district level.

The standards booklet

- Preface
- Acknowledgements
- Consortium members
- Introduction
- Vision
- Standards
- Policy
- Glossary
- References
- Mapping to InTASC and ISLLC standards

Policy questions

- *How can we develop and expand the roles of teachers in their schools, districts and the profession to support student learning?*
- *How can we optimize the culture/learning environment and organizational structures of schools to support teacher leadership?*
- *How can we best prepare and support teachers in assuming leadership roles?*
- *How can we promote, recognize and reward teacher leadership?*
- *How can we best implement and sustain teacher leadership over time?*

MOVING FORWARD

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Next Steps

- Official launch and release: May 5, 2011
- Web site to launch Summer 2011
 - Staffed by four teacher leaders
 - Bring functions to life through text and video exemplars
 - Home for resources, webinars, blogs
- Standards are already being used for:
 - Curriculum for higher education coursework
 - To establish roles in schools
 - To draft legislation
 - To draft state-specific standards
 - For professional development for both teachers and school leaders
- Continue to see teacher leadership evolve

Parking lot issues

- More explicit language regarding student achievement
- Changing school culture
- Technology usage
- Development of teacher leader programs and curricula
- Standards provide awareness and vision – not prescriptions
- Principal-teacher-teacher leader interactions
- Focus language on the teacher leader role, not the teacher role (facilitate, support, etc.)
- Degree or endorsement?
- Assessment/screening tools

For more information
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