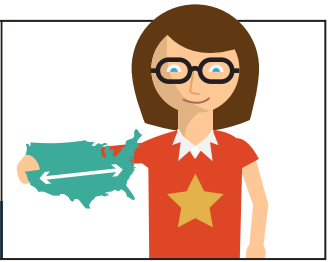


# TEACHER-LED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

## TO REACH EVERY STUDENT WITH EXCELLENT TEACHERS



### DEFINING TEACHER-LEADER ROLES

In many schools, teachers assume leadership roles. These teacher-leader roles vary greatly in their selectivity, responsibilities, and authority from school to school, and in some cases teacher-leaders do not have a formal title. Teacher-leader roles do have a common purpose, however: to enable teaching peers to improve and ultimately increase their students’ academic achievement.

In an Opportunity Culture school, excellent teachers with leadership competencies working in the **Multi-Classroom Leadership** model extend their reach to more students by leading teacher teams that use their methods and materials, providing their teams with on-the-job professional learning. The multi-classroom leader (MCL) continues to teach, while also assigning roles to the team, co-planning instruction, and helping the team teachers develop and excel. These leaders, who are paid more, take accountability for the learning of all students in their “pods,” and delegate responsibilities to teachers and paraprofessionals that make the best use of everyone’s time. *Many* teachers have MCL roles in an Opportunity Culture.

A much smaller number of teacher-leaders in Opportunity Culture schools have hybrid roles, in which they teach part-time while designing curricula or assessments, producing videos for use by other teachers, or playing other roles that benefit many teachers

All Opportunity Culture teacher-leader roles are designed within the **Opportunity Culture Principles**, which state that teams of teachers and school leaders must choose and tailor models to:

1. Reach more students with excellent teachers and their teams
2. Pay teachers more for extending their reach
3. Fund pay within regular budgets
4. Provide protected in-school time and clarity about how to use it for planning, collaboration, and development
5. Match authority and accountability to each person’s responsibilities

Additional teacher-leader roles may operate alongside these Opportunity Culture roles, or independently in schools using traditional staffing models. These other teacher-leader roles vary widely.

Here we present:

- \* A **Teacher-Leader Role List** with very brief descriptions; in practice, roles and titles may vary significantly
- \* A **Teacher-Leader Job Characteristics Checklist** that shows some of the ways in which roles vary

These lists can help schools and districts ensure that each role has a clear purpose with qualifications, pay, accountability, and authority that match the role’s responsibilities. Schools and districts may also use the checklists to align roles within schools and across the district—to avoid overlap that leads to conflicts and to ensure that everyone is working effectively toward common goals.

Districts planning to adopt teacher-leader roles can use these checklists as guides for designing their own leadership roles to benefit other teachers and students.

#### Acknowledgements

This publication was made possible in part by support from Carnegie Corporation of New York. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of Public Impact. Learn more at [OpportunityCulture.org](http://OpportunityCulture.org).

Public Impact encourages the sharing and copying of these materials. Users must include “©2014 Public Impact” and “OpportunityCulture.org” on all pages where material from this document appears. Opportunity Culture is a trademark of Public Impact.

© 2014 Public Impact, Chapel Hill, NC

Please cite this report as: Public Impact. (2014). *Teacher-led professional learning: To reach every student with excellent teachers — Defining teacher-leader roles*. Chapel Hill, NC: Author. Retrieved from [http://opportunityculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Defining\\_Teacher-Leader\\_Roles-Public\\_Impact.pdf](http://opportunityculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Defining_Teacher-Leader_Roles-Public_Impact.pdf).



## Teacher-Leader Role List

Role Title	Description
<b>Multi-Classroom Leader</b>	An excellent teacher who leads a team of teachers, co-teaching, co-planning, and providing on-the-job development, with accountability for team's student outcomes
<b>Hybrid Teacher-Leader</b>	An excellent teacher who combines part-time teaching with any of the roles below or other leadership roles—such as policy advocacy, recording video lessons many other teachers may use, etc.
<b>Department/content chair</b>	Acts as liaison between administration and colleagues; may include instructional leadership and administrative duties
<b>Grade-level chair</b>	Acts as liaison between administration and colleagues; may include instructional leadership and administrative duties
<b>Mentor or coach</b>	Serves as role model and coach to a new teacher
<b>Instructional specialist/coach</b>	Helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies in a specific subject or for a specific student population
<b>Data coach</b>	Helps teachers interpret student data and identify instructional strategies
<b>Curriculum or assessment specialist</b>	Leads teachers to develop standards and follow curriculum and/or to develop aligned assessments
<b>Professional learning facilitator/ PLC</b>	Facilitates staff professional development
<b>Master teacher</b>	Refers most often to advanced role in a teacher's career; responsibilities vary
<b>Lead teacher</b>	Leads in co-taught class, leads teacher team, and/or works with new or struggling teachers to improve instruction

## Teacher-Leader Job Characteristics Checklist

### *Does this role:*

1. Require that the teacher-leader has demonstrated excellence in achieving student outcomes?
2. Pay more?
3. Hold the teacher-leader accountable for student outcomes of other teachers?
4. Expect the teacher-leader to observe and provide job-embedded feedback to other teachers?
5. Allow the teacher-leader to have direct classroom responsibilities and continue teaching for part of the workday?
6. Expect the teacher-leader to be a liaison between teachers and administration?
7. Expect the teacher-leader to develop a culture of collaborative professional practice?
8. Include a formal expectation of the teacher-leader to improve the instructional practice of other teachers?
9. Require that the teacher-leader contribute to evaluation of teachers on their team, possibly to play a role in hiring and dismissal decisions?
10. Require additional training or advanced degree?

### See also:

- \* **Multi-Classroom Leadership:** <http://opportunityculture.org/reach/multi-classroom-leadership-in-person/>
- \* **Teacher Career Paths:** <http://opportunityculture.org/reach/career-paths/>