

# PAID EDUCATOR RESIDENCIES, WITHIN BUDGET

## HOW NEW SCHOOL MODELS CAN RADICALLY IMPROVE TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION

### AN IDEA BRIEF

#### THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

**A**dequately preparing new teachers and principals to lead students and schools well poses a **two-fold challenge**: First, despite paying considerable tuition for most preparation programs, aspiring teachers and principals do not get the extended, intensive coaching by top professionals in K–12 settings that they need to excel rapidly at work. Second, schools are stuck with a pipeline of new teachers and principals ill-prepared for their jobs, and student teaching does not provide a strong basis for screening job candidates. No one is well-served—not aspiring professionals, schools, or students. Schools have been unable to address these challenges at scale in today’s one-teacher-one-classroom mode, despite a proliferation of innovative efforts.

A new opportunity is presented by the growing number of districts and charter operators that are using **new school models** to extend the reach of excellent teachers by letting them lead teams as “multi-classroom leaders.” In these “**Opportunity Culture**” models, **Multi-Classroom Leadership** creates the potential for aspiring teachers to experience paid, full-time residencies led by excellent teachers who lead instructional teams. Similarly, **Multi-School Leadership** that allows excellent principals to lead two or more schools provides similar potential for paid, full-time residencies for aspiring principals—particularly ones who have already led instructional teams as multi-classroom leaders. New school models allow both teacher and principal residents to be paid for a year *within existing school budgets*.

The **full-time, yearlong, paid residencies** that we describe here stand in sharp contrast to typical student teaching, in which schools and teacher preparation programs allow any teacher to supervise part-time, aspiring teachers for one semester, sometimes rotating among classrooms in unaccountable roles. Similarly, most new principals today lack substantial instructional leadership experience. Instead, we envision a future in which every aspiring teacher and principal can be a paid, full-time, full-year resident coached by the nation’s best educators, while being screened for potential hiring.

#### PAID, YEARLONG RESIDENCIES: THE BASICS

The **multi-classroom leader (MCL) model is the foundation** for both aspiring teacher and aspiring principal residencies, and it is the most popular Opportunity Culture model chosen by school teams. MCLs are strong teachers who continue to teach part time while leading a subject or grade team, for much higher pay, within regular school budgets. These teacher-leaders do not just coach; they also co-plan, co-teach, and collaborate with their team teachers to improve instruction, while taking accountability for the learning outcomes of all the students the team serves.

Multi-Classroom Leadership creates a strong environment of support, collaboration, and on-the-job professional learning for teachers. The MCL model, optimized with extra paraprofessional support for teams, breaks the one-teacher-one-classroom mode in schools; creates a new team-based support structure that can benefit current teachers, aspiring teachers, and students; and frees funding to pay MCLs (and, in some cases, other teachers) a substantial supplement and pay aspiring teachers a salary.

The multi-classroom leader role trains excellent teachers in how to be an instructional leader with their own teams. When

the school implements MCLs schoolwide, these teachers are also trained in collaborative schoolwide instructional leadership.

Once several schools in a district have established Multi-Classroom Leadership, some of those MCLs—and others who have shown promise as leaders—can step up to principal residencies led by **multi-school leaders (MSLs)** who have proven their leadership excellence as principals. In these residencies, MSLs guide and coach aspiring principals intensively for a full year, while residents earn a salary within regular budgets.

Schools in several states have designed Opportunity Culture models that extend the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students, pay teachers more, and do all of this within current budgets. This brief features the optimal multi-classroom leader model, enhanced with time swaps that add collaboration time. Visit [www.opportunityculture.org](http://www.opportunityculture.org) to learn more about other models. The multi-school leader model that supports the principal residency is described in *An Excellent Principal for Every School*.

## ASPIRING TEACHER RESIDENCIES

Three characteristics of the optimal multi-classroom leader model make it possible for schools to offer paid, full-time, yearlong teacher residencies within current budgets:

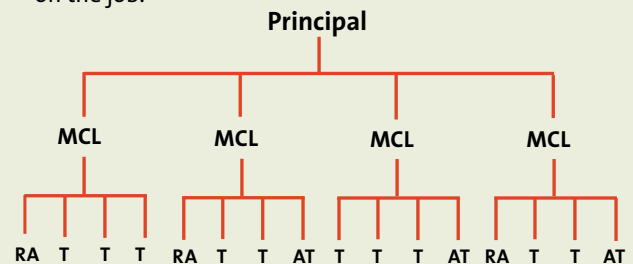
- \* **Schools reserve time for collaboration and coaching led by multi-classroom leaders.** In the MCL model, the right design extends teachers' reach to more students and creates time within the school day for MCL-led grade and subject teams to plan and collaborate both as a group and one-on-one. Scheduling that prioritizes team and individual coaching time, as well as MCL planning time, is critical. In some schools, teams meet *daily* during school hours.
- \* **Teams add integral support roles.** Teams add new paraprofessionals, who report to the MCL and supervise students during digital learning, skills practice, and/or project-based learning. Paraprofessionals can also handle some administrative tasks and take students to lunch and specials/electives, freeing teachers' time. These paraprofessionals, often called "reach associates," also allow MCL-led teams to collaborate during school hours and reduce instructional group sizes.
- \* **Schools free funds for pay.** New paraprofessional roles are sustainably funded by trading in other positions, such as one teaching position on a team and instructional specialists (except for special needs and English language learner teachers). Some teachers move from these traded positions into the higher-authority, higher-accountability multi-classroom leader roles. Position trades save enough money to pay a supplement within budget to MCLs, and to the team members if a school chooses. Schools have paid MCLs supplements averaging about 20 percent of average base pay, and up to 50 percent. A school-based design team that includes teachers determines what position trades to make to keep essential instructional support intact.

There are two options for defining and funding the aspiring teacher resident's role on an MCL-led team:

- \* **Aspiring teachers fill new paraprofessional roles.** While existing teaching assistants remain, an aspiring teacher resident is added instead of an additional paraprofessional or "reach associate." This gives the team another set of hands to save teachers time to plan together, teach collaboratively, and maintain or reduce instructional group sizes while extending the reach of the MCL and team teachers. Position trades free funds to pay aspiring teachers a salary with benefits. Pilot schools have paid aspiring teachers less than paraprofessionals—far more than typical no-pay student teacher roles, but still saving substantial funds to pay team leaders and team teachers more. Other pay levels are possible, as well, by allocating freed funds differently.

## School Structure with Teacher Residents

Each **multi-classroom leader (MCL)** continues to teach while leading a grade or subject team with a mix of 2 to 8 **teachers (T)**, **aspiring teachers (AT)**, or **reach associates (RA)**, developing their own instructional leadership on the job.



- \* **Aspiring teachers assume regular teaching positions, with heavy supervision.** For individuals who demonstrate greater readiness to enter teaching roles, the aspiring teacher residency could be designed as a full teaching position on an MCL-led team. Placement on an MCL-led team ensures frequent, even daily, on-the-job guidance, coaching, and peer support. The full teaching role could be an option for individuals with some work experience who are pursuing a teaching master's degree, mid-career professionals with substantial content knowledge but no teaching experience, and recent college graduates with extensive experience in child or teen development, for example.

## ASPIRING PRINCIPAL RESIDENCIES

When the MCL model is established and functioning successfully schoolwide, four factors create the foundation for schools to offer aspiring principals paid, full-time, yearlong residencies, within current budgets:

- \* **Principals form a team of leaders in each school.** Principals with schoolwide multi-classroom leaders organize their MCLs into a team of leaders to lead instruction and implement a culture of excellence schoolwide. This method has been used by the highest-performing schools implementing the multi-classroom leader model. Some large secondary schools form sub-teams of MCLs, led by a small number of instructional assistant principals who coordinate with one another, keeping spans small but coordinated schoolwide.
- \* **Districts create multi-school leader positions.** Excellent principals with an instructional leadership team extend their reach to a small number of schools, possibly two to eight, as multi-

school leaders (MSLs). At moderate to wide spans within this range, every school also has a principal who forms a team of leaders with each school's multi-classroom leaders. The MSL leads all the principals in the multi-school cluster to learn and support one another's success, and the MSL develops the principals on the job. (See *An Excellent Principal for Every School* for more detail.)

\* **Multi-school leaders coach principals-in-training.** A principal residency can be created within at least one school in the cluster of schools overseen by each multi-school leader, ideally in a school with a strong, stable team of multi-classroom leaders. For example, in a cluster of four schools, one school might have a principal resident and the other three might have full principals, all working together under a multi-school leader.

The principal resident would have already learned to lead instructional excellence as a multi-classroom leader or instructional assistant principal (in larger schools), or a similar role. The resident would round out that experience by playing a full principal role with heavy direction, support, and coaching by the multi-school leader—and with the stability of a multi-classroom leader team co-leading instruction. MSLs can supervise the principal residents in the cluster more closely than experienced principals already performing at a higher level. The residency also acts as a screening year for permanent principal placement.

\* **Funds are freed for pay.** The principal residency is paid by replacing one principal position in a cluster with the resident,

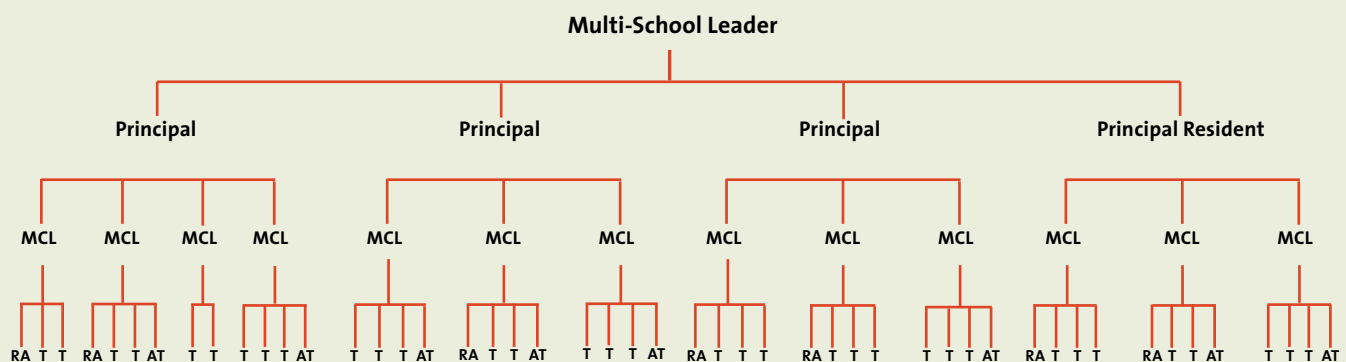
who would lead one of the schools with close supervision by the MSL, as described above.

Position swaps fund higher MSL pay, just as with multi-classroom leaders: Schools can trade one assistant principal position in each school for a lower-paid operations manager role that does not require teacher or administrator credentials. The instructional team of leaders, including the principal, the MCLs, and, in larger schools, remaining assistant principals, assumes any instructional leadership duties that the traded assistant principal position previously handled. The operations manager handles remaining, noninstructional responsibilities that would have been assigned to an assistant principal. In some cases, an assistant principal can assume a principal-in-training position, effectively funding the residency without assistant principal turnover for the “trade.” In others, an assistant principal can remain in leadership while resuming teaching, by assuming a multi-classroom leader position with similar pay, also preventing forced turnover.

Districts have several options for reallocating saved funds to pay. Principal residents can be paid a full salary and benefits, or a substantial portion, matching or exceeding multi-classroom leader pay or assistant principal pay. The principal resident's pay is funded out of the allocation for principal pay. Paying principal residents somewhat less than the full principal salary saves more money to pay multi-school leaders an extra supplement for the extra work associated with developing a novice principal.

### School Structure with Principal Residents

A multi-school leader leads a team of principals, who each lead schoolwide teams of multi-classroom leaders (MCLs), and one principal resident, who has already learned to lead instructional excellence as a multi-classroom leader and gets even more intensive direction, support, and coaching than the other principals.



AT=Aspiring Teacher; RA=Reach Associate (paraprofessional)

## THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS

An array of benefits becomes possible when aspiring teacher and principal residencies are created within the multi-classroom leader model and multi-school leader model. These benefits accrue to the residents themselves, the preparation programs that manage and certify their training, and the schools, districts, and states that become the professional home of these well-trained educators—and, most important, to students.

Benefits for aspiring teachers and principals:

- 1. On-the-job coaching from the best.** Residents of both kinds can practice the many facets of their respective roles with real responsibility while under the guidance of master educators. They become part of teams that are small enough for each member to enjoy frequent, personalized coaching from the team leader—just the kind of support residents need to move rapidly up the learning curve. Residents are integral to the team's success, creating a strong incentive for team teachers and MCLs to take their development seriously.
- 2. Full year to observe and practice.** Teacher and principal residents can experience the whole arc of the school year and have time to practice and refine strategies and skills.
- 3. Network of support.** The MCL-led team gives teacher residents a network within the school that they would not have in a typical student teaching experience, and aspiring principals join a network of principals. Experienced teachers who work on a team with a teacher resident can provide additional support, introduction to the school culture, and personal connections that will prove critical during early teaching years. The same is true of aspiring principals and their network of principal colleagues.

- 4. Pay and benefits.** Student teaching is typically unpaid, which puts pressure on teachers and preparation programs to keep the experience confined to a semester. By offering pay and benefits, student teaching on an MCL-led team helps aspiring teachers cover their tuition and living expenses during the last year of their prep program.

Principal residents who would typically jump into the job without much leadership experience, or with experience as an administratively-focused assistant principal, now have the chance for a full-year residency *without giving up pay*, or a more practical and financially feasible way to finish advanced degree educational leadership programs.

Benefits for educator preparation programs:

- 1. Student recruitment and retention.** Programs that offer potential students paid, top-notch clinical practice for a full year can out-recruit their competition and reduce attrition. They also give potential students a professional pathway into

schools that offer desirable, paid teacher and principal career paths through the multi-classroom and multi-school leader models. This combination can attract candidates who seek to serve and lead as educators, but who are also concerned about immediate compensation and long-term career opportunities.

- 2. Better outcomes.** Preparation programs are under increased pressure to show how well their graduates produce student learning in their early years as educators. After a year of training and mentorship under an outstanding educator, aspiring teacher and principal residents will be better equipped to produce positive student learning results quickly.
- 3. Reduced strain on preparation faculty.** For students in their final year of an educator prep program, faculty would not need to provide traditional classroom hours but could engage with student teachers and principals in more focused ways. For example, they could facilitate weekly, evening discussion groups to examine challenges of professional practice and school leadership with each type of resident. This could free faculty time for research.
- 4. Lower costs and higher faculty pay.** Reduced teaching loads also make it possible for preparation programs to operate with a leaner staff, without reducing tuition and fees—potentially allowing higher pay for remaining faculty, lower costs to protect against budget crises, or a combination of both.

Benefits for schools, districts, and states:

- 1. Educator selectivity, recruitment, and retention.** By offering paid positions and an exceptional development opportunity, schools can become more selective about who becomes a student teacher. Over time, the larger pipeline of leaders created with the MCL position also creates the opportunity to be more selective about who becomes a principal. Schools gain new leverage in the competition for talented people—great initial training and a potential career path if they later excel in teaching and/or leadership.
- 2. Meaningful contributions from teacher and principal residents.** The MCL is responsible for the teacher resident's on-the-job development, carving out roles that support the teaching team and give the student teacher opportunities to contribute to students' learning. Similarly, each principal resident gets direct guidance and support from a multi-school leader while taking real responsibility leading a school, rather than just being an extra body on board. Because of the paid career paths, many teacher and principal residents will be motivated by the potential to secure a job offer at their residency school, making them eager to show rapid growth in skill and effectiveness in helping students learn. Their contributions can be direct and immediate during the residency.

**3. Performance-based candidate screening.** Even extensive interviewing cannot substitute for the exposure of direct, sustained experience with someone at work. The MCL's experience working with the teacher resident and the MSL's experience working with the principal resident can inform hiring decisions by the school, district, or charter organization; graduation from the educator preparation program; and/or licensure awarded by the state.

**4. Continuity and retention.** Teacher residents on MCL-led teams have a full year of induction into the culture, expectations, and processes of the school. This creates an easier transition when a teacher resident becomes a new teacher. The built-in support for new teachers in these schools can also contribute to teaching effectiveness and retention beyond the residency. The supervising MCL can either continue to guide and coach former residents who join the team permanently, or, for former residents who join another MCL's team, help the MCL focus on the new teacher's areas for development. The same applies to multi-school leaders when their former principal residents become full principals within their cluster or district.

Students would likely be the greatest beneficiaries: stronger school leadership and teaching in the early years, and stronger educator recruitment and retention, could lead to better student outcomes for many students.

Positioning teacher residents within the multi-classroom leader model and principal residents within the multi-school leader model are two more examples of **virtuous cycles** in an Opportunity Culture. A virtuous cycle has the potential to attract more high-caliber candidates, give them great preparation on the job led by outstanding professionals, feed them into schools with career paths, and position them to grow into teacher-leaders and multi-school leaders who will help train the next crop of great teachers and principals.

To be successful, strong partnerships between educator preparation programs, districts, and schools, are essential. This brief does not attempt to address all the design issues needed to implement this vision, such as changes in preparation curricula and details of aspiring educator roles.

In addition, this brief does not address the state policy changes that some locations will need for teacher certification and preparation accreditation to allow full-year residencies and reduced classroom coursework for aspiring educators. Some locations also may need to remove other policy barriers to extending the reach of excellent teachers; these are explained in detail in *Seizing Opportunity at the Top II*.

Public Impact will address these details in future publications, with significant input by educator preparation programs and excellent, experienced educators working in Opportunity Culture models.

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