Using High-Impact Teacher Leadership to Address Talent Challenges in School Turnaround

Pilot
Partner Organizations

AIR

PUBLIC IMPACT
Introductions

- Your name
- Your role
- What you think of when you hear *teacher leadership*
Objectives

- **Review common talent challenges** in turnaround schools and the potential for teacher leadership to address those challenges.
- **Examine a framework** to recognize characteristics of high-impact teacher leader roles in the school turnaround context.
- **Consider the importance of “being bold”** when designing teacher leader roles for turnaround schools.
- **Assess** whether teacher leadership in your state or district is high impact and whether you are taking bold actions.
- **Identify** how your state or district could make teacher leadership a more effective component of turnaround strategies.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How Teacher Leadership Can Address Talent Challenges in School Turnaround</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
<td>Brainstorm</td>
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<td>2. High-Impact Teacher Leader Roles</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Case Study Sorting Teacher Leader Roles</td>
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<td>3. Bold Actions to Get There</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Boldness Benchmarks</td>
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<td>4. Self-Assessment and Reflection</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
<td>Tool Feedback</td>
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How Teacher Leadership Can Address Talent Challenges in School Turnaround
Defining Teacher Leadership

“The process by which teachers influence colleagues, principals, and other school community members to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement.”

## Examples of Teacher Leader Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers Supporting Teachers</th>
<th>Teachers Providing Schoolwide Guidance</th>
<th>Teachers With Distributed Accountability</th>
<th>Teachers Leading Specific Initiatives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expert teachers who collaborate with other teachers individually or on teams to promote improvements in their practice</td>
<td>Expert teachers who develop school- or district-wide resources, goals, or strategies, often specializing in a subject</td>
<td>Expert teachers who team teach, manage, and coach a team of teachers, serving as the teacher of record for all students served by the team</td>
<td>Teachers who plan, coordinate, and manage specific initiatives designed to address school needs or learning conditions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Chair</th>
<th>Instructional Specialist Lead</th>
<th>Multi-Classroom Leader Lead</th>
<th>Lead for:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade-Level Chair</td>
<td>Curriculum Lead</td>
<td>Lead Team Teacher</td>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC Lead</td>
<td>PD Facilitator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Competency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Analysis Lead</td>
<td>Instructional Lead</td>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum Transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Mentor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
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Teacher Leader Perspective

“I like the idea of teacher leadership—everybody likes the idea of it, but it often feels like busywork. I wouldn’t mind doing extra work if it meant I could redesign how we do PD in my building, if I can influence what is going on in my classroom and the classrooms around me.”

— ‘Annie,’ Teacher Leader

Brainstorm

- What talent challenges have you seen in turnaround schools?
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all
Inequitable Access to Excellent Teaching

Likelihood of Access to Highly Effective Teachers

Source: TNTP (2012)
Challenges and Solutions

Common Challenges

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all

Potential Solution
Use teacher leader roles to give more students access to great teachers
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. **Attract and retain great teachers**
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all
What working conditions make great teachers leave?

• My school is not committed to improving my instructional practice.
• Teachers at my school don’t share a common vision of what effective teaching looks like.
• The expectations for effective teaching are not clearly defined at my school.

Turnover rates among Irreplaceables were 50 percent higher in schools with weak instructional cultures.
Attract and Retain Great Teachers

**FIGURE 11 | LOW-COST RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR IRREPLACEABLES**

**FEEDBACK & DEVELOPMENT**
1. Provided me with regular, positive feedback
2. Helped me identify areas of development
3. Gave me critical feedback about my performance informally

**RECOGNITION**
4. Recognized my accomplishments publicly
5. Informed me that I am high-performing

**RESPONSIBILITY & ADVANCEMENT**
6. Identified opportunities or paths for teacher leader roles
7. Put me in charge of something important

**RESOURCES**
8. Provided me with access to additional resources for my classroom

Source: TNTP (2012)
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. **Attract and retain great teachers**
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all

**Potential Solution**
Offer teacher leader roles with more responsibility and authority, with higher pay
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. **Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve**
4. Principals can’t do it all
44% of teachers say that there is not enough time built into their daily schedule for professional development.

12% of teachers report receiving coaching as often as weekly.

Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2014)
Need for Job-Embedded Support for All Teachers to Improve

Characteristics for success:
- Facilitated by teacher leaders
- Uses an improvement cycle
- Protected time to meet
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all

Potential Solution
Teacher leader has daily scheduled time to lead professional learning of small teams
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. **Principals can’t do it all**
Principals Can’t Do It All

How Do Principals Use Their Time?

- Administration, 27%
- Organization Management, 21%
- Internal Relations, 15%
- External Relations, 5%
- Instructional Program, 7%
- Instructional, 6%
- Day-to-Day Instructional, 6%
- Other Tasks, 19%

Source: Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2009)
Principals Can’t Do It All

**Figure 4:** Principals manage many more people than do leaders in other fields

In a typical school, principals supervise up to 10 non-instructional staff, pushing the total close to 50 people.

Sources: Bain Distributed Leadership Study 2015; Bain Organization practice
Principals Can’t Do It All

**Figure 9:** Schools have added a large number of roles in an attempt to assist principals with leadership responsibilities

Indexed number of leaders/principal in a representative district (principal=1)

Schools have added **12 additional leaders** for every principal

Source: Bain Distributed Leadership Study 2015
Challenges and Solutions

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all

Potential Solution
Principals work with a team of teacher leaders to provide instructional leadership
Challenges and Solutions

Activity: Rapid Response Rounds

### Common Challenges

1. Inequitable access to excellent teaching
2. Attract and retain great teachers
3. Need for job-embedded support for all teachers to improve
4. Principals can’t do it all

### Potential Solutions

- Use teacher leader roles to give more students access to excellent teachers
- Offer teacher leader roles with more responsibility and authority, with much higher pay
- Teacher leader has daily scheduled time to lead the professional learning of a small team
- Principals work with a team of teacher leaders to provide instructional leadership
High-Impact Teacher Leadership Roles
## A Framework for High-Impact Teacher Leadership in Turnarounds

### Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| **Selectivity**                              | • Has proven ability to achieve greater than expected student growth  
• Demonstrates competencies needed to lead adults  
• Has content expertise and experience |
| **Teach and Reach More Students**             | • Directly instructs some students, in whole class or small group  
• Reaches substantially more students by coaching a team |
| **Authority, Autonomy, and Accountability**  | • Has authority to direct and support colleagues in their work  
• Has autonomy to make decisions regarding their time and work  
• Has access to leaders and resources to move their work forward  
• Has a formal evaluation aligned to the specific responsibilities |
| **Time to Lead**                             | • School schedule protects teacher leader’s time for teacher leader responsibilities  
• School schedule allows flexibility for teacher leader to determine best use of time |
| **Pay**                                      | • Pay increases to match increased responsibilities and additional time required, if applicable |

Adapted from: Public Impact, The Whole Package (2015)
Case Study
How Principals Use Multi-Classroom Leadership (MCL) in School Turnarounds

Learn from a principal:
Alison Harris Welcher
Ranson IB Middle School
Project LIFT in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Discussion questions:
• What are key factors of the teacher leader roles that Ms. Welcher implemented?
• How did she leverage her teacher leader roles to change teaching and learning?
“As PLC lead, I was in the dark. Teachers may have articulated brilliant lessons during meetings, but I had no idea—and definitely no authority to see—what they actually looked like behind closed doors.”

Source: Barrett (2016)

“As a Multi-Classroom Leader (MCL) my schedule’s flexibility also lets me have frequent informal meetings with teachers in the hall and their classroom while co-teaching. They know they can tell me where they need help, without fear. “Ms. Burns, I just tried to explain protein synthesis and they looked at me like I’m crazy. Can you come into my second-block class and tell me what I’m doing wrong?”

Source: Burns (2017)
Activity

Identify High-Impact Factors of Teacher Leader Roles

**Step 1:** Use the *teacher leader role* cards to form a column on the left, and form a row at the top with your *high-impact factors* cards.

**Step 2:** For each teacher leader role description card, discuss whether it matches a high-impact factor. If so, place in appropriate column. If not, put the card off to the side.

**Step 3:** For each teacher leader role, tally how many high-impact factors it addresses.

**Closing:** How were the teacher leader roles high impact? Where did they fall short? What implications would this have as you aim to address talent challenges?
Bold Actions to Get There
Why Boldness Is Needed

“Turnaround efforts are made when organizations are in a state of entrenched failure.”

Source: Steiner and Hassel (2011, p. 2)
Boldness Benchmarks
for Turnaround States and Districts

**Ambition.** Setting goals high enough so that meeting them would close most talent gaps in turnaround schools.

**Large-scale impact.** Ensuring that your target population will be reached by a strategy.

**Change the fundamentals.** Altering the talent picture for high-need schools by changing the organization, roles, use of time, and funds spent.

**Financially focused.** Directing sufficient dollars to strategies that contribute to ambitious, large-scale change.

**Sustainable.** Funded from recurring budgets, not temporary funds.

**Systemic.** Work across teams and departments to make your efforts larger scale, more financially focused, and sustainable.
Which boldness benchmarks seem most important to establishing high-impact teacher leader roles in turnaround schools?

Which of the benchmarks are typically part of your decision making? Which are not?

How might you use the boldness benchmarks in your state or district?
Pilot User Feedback: Self-Assessment Tool and Reflection
Self-Assessment Tool Feedback

- What should a self-assessment tool help you consider as you review current teacher leader practices?
- What questions would you like to able to answer with a self-assessment tool?
References


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Advancing state efforts to grow, respect, and retain great teachers and leaders for all students