

Teacher Leadership Innovation (TLI) Overview 2015-16 School Year

Overview

First launched in the spring of 2013, the TLI program is a unique opportunity for teachers and school leaders to design and implement innovative teacher leadership roles that allow a teacher to spend part of the day teaching and part of the day leading other adults in the building. Designed at the school level, with support from central office, the TLI roles are specifically tailored to a school's needs and priorities.

By leveraging funding from the US Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to add additional staff to a school's budget, teachers serving in the TLI roles receive additional release time that is dedicated to their role as a leader.

Now in its third year of implementation, **29 schools and 105 teacher leaders** are participating in TLI. Participants receive extensive professional development and coaching to help them be successful in their teacher leadership role. Teacher leaders and principals will also participate in school visits, regular professional development focused on adult leadership, and one-on-one leadership coaching.

TLI aims to:

- Provide the training and resources for excellent teachers to take on leadership roles that are meaningful, sustainable, and that address a top school priority
- Expand the reach of excellent teachers to improve school-wide student achievement
- Increase the amount of feedback that teachers receive and encourage a culture of collaboration
- Improve teacher retention by providing a career pathway that does not require leaving the classroom

Teacher leader Roles

An underlying belief of TLI is that individual school needs and priorities are best identified and addressed at the school level. Roles designed by pilot schools follow **three design principles**. Teacher leaders must:

1. Work directly with students for a significant part of their day
2. Lead other teachers as a coach or mentor
3. Focus on improving teacher practice in the classroom

Support and Development

To maximize the effectiveness of teacher leaders, TLI offers the following resources.

- **Release time** from the classroom for teacher leaders to fulfill leadership responsibilities
- **PD and one-on-one coaching on leading adults** from national experts in teacher leadership
- **\$2,500 stipend** to recognize the expanded role taken on by teacher leaders

Throughout the 2015-16 school year, TLI teacher leaders and principals will participate in professional development, leadership coaching sessions, data collection, and cohort events that are all critical to the success of the TLI pilot.

- **Spring Induction:** Spring Induction is the first opportunity for TLI teacher leaders and administrators have to come together as a cohort. TLI teacher leaders take part in a full day of cohort building, skill development, and vision setting. Principals spend time separately, learning more about the role design process and preparing to facilitate parts of Summer Intensive I.
- **Summer Intensive I:** Summer Intensive I focuses on designing the teacher leadership roles that teacher leaders will be implementing during the 2015-16 school year. School teams spend the week building a common vision for success, setting team and individual goals for the TLI program, determining the strategies and supports necessary to reach those goals, and designing schedules that allow teacher leaders to leverage their release time most effectively.
- **Summer Intensive II:** Summer Intensive II consists of four days of sessions that focus on ensuring teacher leaders have the foundational skills necessary to coach their peers around the goals and focus areas that were identified during Summer Intensive I.
- **Saturday Workshops:** Leading Educators will continue to lead professional development sessions throughout the school year over the course of four Saturday Workshops. These full-day workshops will include PD sessions facilitated by Leading Educators and opportunities for TLI participants to present problems of practice to their peers through a variety of protocols.
- **School-Embedded Leadership Coaching:** Biweekly, individually-tailored leadership coaching will allow participants to integrate the skills introduced during professional development into their daily practice. Leadership coaches will work directly with teacher leaders and principals in their schools—observing, providing feedback, and developing plans to help participants achieve their goals. Coaching visits may consist of one-on-one leadership coaching, co-observation, or even co-facilitation and modeling.
- **School Visit Days:** All TLI schools are expected to host one School Visit Day (SVD) during the 2014-15 school year. The SVDs allow participants to see the work of TLI teacher leaders in action, provide feedback, and learn from best practices across the district.

TLI Sample Roles

Stephanie Johnson, Literacy Coach, Eliot Hine MS (TLI 2.0)

Through a combination of school-wide PD, small group coaching sessions, and one-on-one observation and debrief, Ms. Johnson ensures that Common Core aligned literacy strategies are being implemented with fidelity across grade levels at Eliot Hine MS. Ms. Johnson uses her roughly 50% release time to model lessons, plan PD, observe colleagues, and conduct six-week coaching cycle (3 teachers per cycle) that push literacy instruction.

Lisa Rapoza, Special Education Coach, Garrison ES (TLI 2.0)

Ms. Rapoza is an early education autism teacher. She teaches and plans for responsibilities related to teaching until 12:00 PM daily. The second half of her day is devoted to her responsibilities as a Special Education Coach. In the fall, Ms. Rapoza's teacher leadership work focuses on special education professional development and informal observations, which serve to establish expectations and create space for Ms. Rapoza to assess the needs of her colleagues. Moving into October, the focus will shift to classroom observations and one-on-one debriefs.