Enhancing Teacher Leadership in Charter Schools
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## CONTENTS

Scenario: An Incomplete Start ................................................ 1

Benefits of Enhancing Teacher Leadership ........................................ 3

Tips and Cautions ........................................................................... 5

Strategies for Teacher Leadership in Charter Schools .................... 6

Strategy 1: Identify Barriers to Teacher Leadership Within Your School and Formulate a Plan to Remove Them ........................................... 8

Strategy 2: Recruit Qualified and Effective Teacher Leaders ................. 10

Strategy 3: Identify and Create Opportunities for Teacher Leadership ........ 12
  Substrategy 3.1: Think Broadly .................................................... 13
  Substrategy 3.2: Incorporate Teacher Leadership Into Professional Development Programs .............................................................. 16
  Substrategy 3.3: Establish Professional Learning Communities ............ 18
  Substrategy 3.4: Promote Participation in Professional Teaching Networks .... 19
  Substrategy 3.5: Distribute Leadership Tasks ....................................... 19

Strategy 4: Encourage Teacher Participation in Leadership Preparation, Training, and Development Programs ........................................... 22

Strategy 5: Enhance the Professionalism of Teachers and Teaching .......... 27

Strategy 6: Create a Supportive School Environment for Teacher Leadership .......... 30
  Substrategy 6.1: Transform School Culture ..................................... 30
  Substrategy 6.2: Recognize Teacher Leaders ...................................... 31
  Substrategy 6.3: Promote Principal Support and Preparation ................... 32

Real-Life Example: Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) Teacher Leader Program .......... 34

References ..................................................................................... 35

Additional Resources ..................................................................... 36
Laura Mead, an experienced mathematics teacher, has taught for seven years at Day Star Academy, a K–12 charter school in an urban school district in the Midwest. During the course of her career, she has taught all grade levels and most mathematics classes in the high school. For the last few years, she has been teaching ninth grade, which is the entry point into the high school. She has some concerns about the ninth-grade program and does not think it effectively meets the needs of the students. Mead would like to make it more learner-centered and encourage the ninth-grade teachers to include more hands-on, active, real-world instructional strategies that would engage their students.

Day Star Academy is located in an economically depressed urban center. The collapse of manufacturing in the region has left many families in the area either unemployed or working in low-paying positions in the service industry. The charter school was created when the previous K–12 school was restructured because of its consistent low performance. Day Star Academy’s mission is to serve low-income, minority students through a singular focus on college preparation. Mead is deeply committed to her charter school’s mission and plays an active role in integrating college preparatory materials into the school’s curriculum and developing honors-style classes.

Day Star Academy’s principal, Mrs. Johnson, is in her second year in the position and wants to begin experimenting with a new leadership and administrative model in the school. Trained in a traditional principal preparation program, Principal Johnson is overwhelmed by the multiplicity of her duties in the charter school environment. She values the greater autonomy that working in a charter school provides but is frustrated by the lack of support she receives from the school’s governing board. As a result, most of her time is dedicated to dealing with payroll, facilities, reporting requirements, school marketing and enrollment, and recruiting staff, while instructional and strategic planning often get left behind. Principal Johnson was recently introduced to the concepts of teacher leadership and distributed leadership by a fellow charter school principal and has decided that this approach might facilitate better instructional leadership within the school by drawing on the talents of her experienced teachers.

Although teachers at Day Star Academy already exercise a great deal of influence over curriculum and the classroom and most teachers willingly take on informal leadership roles, the teaching staff has generally worked together without a formal leadership structure. Principal Johnson chose to appoint Mead as lead teacher of the ninth-grade academic team. Within her new position, she has release time to work with teachers and a small stipend for additional duties. Mead had no desire for a title or serving in an administrative capacity; however, she accepted because she viewed this new position as a way to implement her vision for a learner-centered instructional program across disciplines that would benefit ninth-grade students.
Unfortunately, all did not go as planned. As soon as Mead began to make changes, she encountered the following obstacles:

- **Colleagues.** Her colleagues are not willing to work with her on the learner-centered project. They resent her new title and position as well as the benefits that come with her new responsibilities. In addition, they do not want to make changes and say they will only do what the principal requires. They exclude her from team camaraderie, and she feels isolated from the collegiality she enjoyed when she was an equal member of the team.

- **Principal.** Principal Johnson is not available for support. It seems impossible to schedule a time with her to discuss plans and report progress, and she is not willing to secure the resources needed for staff training. When Mead created a new block schedule for ninth graders, which was more appropriate for the new hands-on teaching strategies, she encountered a glitch, and Principal Johnson showed her displeasure by taking the scheduling responsibility away from Mead.

- **Time and Place.** Mead is always pressed for time, even though she was released from her weekly study-hall duty. She is afraid that her own teaching is suffering because of the time she is spending on implementing the new program. In addition, she has trouble scheduling a common time for the ninth-grade team to meet because everyone has a different planning period. Furthermore, most of Day Star Academy’s teachers are young and inexperienced, and implementing the new program requires a lot of personal mentoring and contact; however, the members of the ninth-grade team are scattered all over the school in their subject department wings, so it is difficult for her to have informal discussions in passing or to visit classrooms to observe and give feedback on instructional practices.

Mead is frustrated but determined to make her idea for learner-centered teaching work! Principal Johnson also wants to improve instruction in the school and ensure that instructional leadership is being provided, especially to the newest teachers.

How can Mead and Principal Johnson learn together? What skills does Mead need to lead instructional improvement? How can Principal Johnson support her as she strives to be an effective teacher leader?
BENEFITS OF ENHANCING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Enhancing teacher leadership can help charter schools reach the following goals:

- **Improve teacher quality.** Teacher expertise is at “the foundation of increasing teacher quality and advancements in teaching and learning,” and is “more widely available when accomplished teachers model effective instructional practices, encourage sharing of best practices, mentor new teachers, and collaborate with teaching colleagues” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, pp. 258–259). Teacher leaders’ expertise in teaching and learning is needed to lead instructional improvement and enhance teacher quality.

  Opportunities for enhancing teacher quality through teacher leadership are readily available through the planning, participation, and evaluation of professional development. Teacher leaders can help principals support professional development by identifying teacher development needs, offering professional learning experience, developing and delivering opportunities, and evaluating the outcomes of staff development.

- **Improve student learning.** Improving student learning requires every leader in the school to focus on this core outcome. The hope for teacher leadership today is continuous improvement in teaching and learning in all schools and thus, increased achievement for every student (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Providing teachers with instructional teacher leadership positions has increased students’ academic achievement by improving teachers’ instruction. Furthermore, teachers who model lifelong learning for students help to create a community of learners. Teacher leadership facilitates teacher growth and learning, and when teachers learn, their students learn.

- **Ensure that education reform efforts work.** Teacher leadership is vital to education reform, and its importance lies in new understandings of organizational development and leadership that suggest, “active involvement of individuals at all levels and within all domains of an organization is necessary if change is to take hold” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 255). Teacher leaders help “guide fellow teachers as well as the school at large toward higher standards of achievement and individual responsibility for school reform” (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000, p. 27).

  A number of federal initiatives highlight the importance of teacher leadership in educational reform. The No Child Left Behind Act emphasized educational improvement at all grade levels and provided “further incentive for teachers to be involved in teacher leadership” (Birky, Shelton, & Headley, 2006, p. 88). More recently, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and Race to the Top legislation have emphasized quality teachers and teacher leadership as central to school turnaround and improvement efforts. To implement curricular and instructional reforms at the classroom level, school principals rely on full commitment from teachers who are willing to lead in the classroom and on instructional teams. Reform possibilities reside in the hands of teachers; they are on the front lines and know the classroom issues, the culture of the school, and the types of support they need to do their jobs.
• **Recruit, retain, motivate, and reward accomplished teachers.** Teacher leadership is crucial to reinvigorating the human capital pool available to charter schools by recruiting and retaining excellent teachers. *A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 2010) emphasizes the need to recruit, retain, motivate, and reward accomplished teachers. Building in leadership roles and opportunities for teachers is an essential step in accomplishing this goal.

Teachers want to work in schools that are designed for them to be successful and in which they can influence key decisions that affect instruction and student success. For example, Hirsch (2006) found in his study of teacher recruitment and retention in Alabama that leadership opportunities were important factors in teachers’ decisions to work in certain school contexts. Opportunities for leadership are particularly important in recruiting and retaining Gen Y teachers, who are eager to take on leadership roles early in their careers (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009).

Influencing teaching and learning for adults and children through greater involvement in school leadership is appealing to many accomplished teachers. Teachers find opportunities for continuous learning as they expand the ways in which they contribute throughout their careers. “Teachers who lead help to shape their own schools and, thereby, their own destinies as educators” (Barth, 2001, p. 445).

• **Provide opportunities for professional growth.** Teacher leadership clearly contributes to the growth and learning of the teachers themselves. When teachers actively pursue leadership opportunities, their lives are enriched and energized, and their knowledge and skills in teaching increase dramatically. This cycle of growth leads to increased confidence and a stronger commitment to teaching. Professional growth also occurs as the result of collaboration with peers, assisting other teachers, working with administrators, and being exposed to new ideas. In fact, studies find that leading and learning are interrelated and “teacher leaders grow in their understandings of instructional, professional, and organizational practice as they lead” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 288).

• **Extend principal capacity.** Teacher leadership provides the additional human capital needed to run the organizational operations of the charter school, which are too complex for most principals to run independently. Growing teacher leadership in a school extends a principal’s own capacity while simultaneously reducing his or her workload. Indeed, teacher leaders are a source of reliable, useful, and professional help for the principal, particularly in the area of instructional leadership. “When teachers lead, principals extend their own capacity” (Barth, 2001, p. 445).

• **Create a more democratic school environment.** When teacher leaders take on important schoolwide responsibilities and are centrally involved in school decision making, they imbue democratic qualities and practices into their schools. Students benefit from observing and experiencing participatory forms of decision making. They also benefit from higher teacher morale because their teachers are involved in democratic decision making and school leadership. The distribution of power and accountability within a charter school circumscribe the boundaries of teachers’ influence and shape teachers’ working conditions (Ingersoll, 2003). In every school, leadership opportunities allow teachers to extend their influence beyond their own classrooms to the department or teaching team; across the school; and, in some cases, beyond the school (Danielson, 2007).
TIPS AND CAUTIONS

To encourage teacher leadership in your charter school(s), be sure to do the following:

- Value and respect the role and work of teacher leaders.
- Embrace change and allow data-driven, research-based risk taking.
- Provide affirmation for teachers’ leadership tasks.
- Promote and facilitate collaboration.
- Provide technical support for teacher leaders.
- Empower teachers in their leadership tasks.
- Involve faculty in decision making.

And be careful not to do the following:

- Withhold, control, or limit power from teachers who are involved in decision making appropriate to their experience, knowledge, and expertise.
- Devalue the work and efforts made by teacher leaders.
- Place teachers in isolated, rather than collaborative, situations.
- Focus on micromanaging the details instead of providing the big picture and supporting the larger goal.
STRATEGIES FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN CHARTER SCHOOLS

The charter school framework has enormous promise for promoting the rapid growth and expansion of teacher leadership; however, several aspects of the charter school framework also raise potential perils for teacher leadership. The greater autonomy of charter school administrators allows them to restructure leadership systems and create new opportunities for teacher leadership to best suit their school’s mission and needs (National Charter School Resource Center, 2011). Principals and administrators are free to adopt alternative leadership models; create leadership positions specifically for teachers; cultivate a school culture that expects, rewards, and encourages teacher leadership; and focus on teacher leadership in their staff recruitment, retention, and promotion processes.

Indeed, the charter school framework lends itself well to teacher leadership. Teachers in charter schools generally are given more influence at both the classroom and school levels. In addition, lacking access to traditional district-level support, teachers in charter schools are often responsible for creating and deploying their own professional development activities in-house (Gross, 2011).

Moreover, given the growing need for charter school principals and the lack of adequate principal preparation programs, many charter schools use an innovative “grow-your-own” approach to school leadership. As a result, charter school teachers are often tapped as future charter school administrators and leaders (Robelen, 2008). In addition, when a charter school network expands and establishes new charter schools, many teachers are promoted into leadership positions. The Leadership Program designed by the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) is a prominent example of an innovative charter school leadership pipeline created to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding charter school network. The KIPP Leadership Program includes six separate programs designed to develop existing or aspiring KIPP teachers for a variety of leadership positions, including teacher leadership positions (e.g., grade-level chair, department chair, Saturday school coordinator), leadership team positions, and future principals and administrators (KIPP n.d.). In a recent study of charter schools across six states, Gross (2011) found that “[i]t was common to hear about enterprising and committed teachers moving into leadership positions in the school, to seed new schools as the school added campuses, and to take on central management roles as schools expanded to form charter management organizations operating several schools collectively” (pp. 8–9).

On the other hand, the charter school framework poses several perils for teacher leadership that need to be taken into consideration. First, charter schools tend to be smaller in size and more informal in structure—two characteristics that make them “particularly vulnerable to internal disagreements because there are few established rules or principles to fall back on to resolve a dispute once it develops” (Gross, 2011, p. 15). For this reason, “fairness and trust” among teachers and between teachers and administrators is “the glue that holds most charter schools together” (Gross, 2011, p. 14). Although high levels of trust can certainly facilitate the process of creating teacher leaders, the process of change may also imperil that trust. Developing teacher leadership necessarily involves creating a certain degree of hierarchy among teachers while adding a new set of responsibilities for which teachers will now be held accountable, but these changes can create new conflicts. For charter schools that have yet to establish strong trust relationships between staff, the process could be destabilizing.
Second, charter school teachers report that they are often asked to accept new responsibilities, change classes, or take on additional students on a regular basis; thus, charter school teachers experience a high level of uncertainty in what their job will entail over a one-year contract, and many teachers cite this as one of the reasons they have chosen to leave charter schools (Gross 2011). Opportunities for teacher leadership are an important source of career and professional growth for teachers, but if principals fail to plan ahead and adjust workloads appropriately, teacher leadership opportunities could indirectly contribute to teacher burnout and increase attrition.

The following strategies are designed to help charter school principals and administrators capitalize on the promise that the charter school framework holds for teacher leadership and to avoid its potential perils. In the following pages of this document, each strategy is accompanied by a list of resources that should be consulted for more in-depth information.

1. Identify barriers to teacher leadership within your school and formulate a plan to remove them.

2. Recruit qualified and effective teacher leaders.

3. Identify and create opportunities for teacher leadership in a variety of areas including professional development programs, professional learning communities, professional teaching networks, and employment of distributed leadership models.

4. Encourage teacher participation in leadership preparation, training, and development programs.

5. Enhance the professionalism of teachers and teaching.

6. Create a supportive school environment for teacher leadership by transforming school culture, encouraging positive faculty relationships, providing recognition to teacher leaders, and promoting principal support and preparation.
STRATEGY 1: Identify Barriers to Teacher Leadership Within Your School and Formulate a Plan to Remove Them

The first step in growing teacher leadership is to remove barriers. Several obstacles must be addressed before establishing leadership roles and designating specific teachers as leaders. As highlighted in the following resources, one common barrier is traditional teaching culture that values egalitarianism and autonomy. Cultivating teacher leaders will require generating a common understanding of teacher leadership, its purpose and goals, and creating genuine buy-in from staff. New teacher leaders also require support to develop the leadership skills necessary to succeed in their new roles. In addition, teacher leaders need practical supports, such as changes to schedules and workloads to prevent overload and burnout.

Resource 1: Impediments to Teacher Leadership

Barth identifies the following impediments to teacher leadership:

- **Full plate.** With so many additional responsibilities, the opportunity for school leadership can be seen as an add-on.
- **Time.** Teachers sometimes do not have time for leadership activities, and if they do have time, they expect to be paid for it.
- **Colleagues.** Teacher leaders may receive disapproval from fellow teachers and administrators in the form of passive and active resistance that thwart teacher initiatives toward school leadership.
- **Standardized tests.** Teachers are focused on tests and raising student scores rather than taking on leadership responsibilities.

Resource 2: Knocking Down Barriers to Leadership Success

This source includes strategies that second-stage teachers can use to overcome obstacles they may encounter as they move into teacher leadership roles, such as “autonomy, egalitarianism, and deference to seniority.”
**Resource 3: Challenges to Teacher Leadership**


Long-standing norms of the teaching profession can significantly challenge the prospects of teacher leadership. For example, collegiality among teachers does not always extend to teacher leaders because the hierarchical nature of the relationship violates the professional norms of equality and independence. Similarly, a prevailing norm in the teaching profession is egalitarianism, which fosters the view that accepting leadership roles is “stepping out of line.” Thus, one problem with formal teacher leadership roles is that they create hierarchies within the teaching ranks and cause conflict among teaching colleagues. Some teacher-leadership-friendly cultures exist, but they are not widespread.

**Resource 4: Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles to Teacher Leadership**


This research study of the work of teacher leaders found that to be effective with their colleagues, lead teachers had to learn a variety of leadership skills while on the job. In addition, action is required by teachers to encourage schools to create leadership positions for teachers.
STRATEGY 2: Recruit Qualified and Effective Teacher Leaders

Hiring flexibility places charter schools in a unique position to include leadership as a criterion in the recruiting and hiring process. Recruit teachers who have taken leadership roles in past positions, who demonstrate a willingness or eagerness for leadership, or who have been trained in preparation programs that emphasized teacher leadership.

Resource 5: Knowledge Is Power Program’s School Leadership Programs


The KIPP School Leadership Program includes a total of six distinct leadership programs aimed at developing KIPP teachers as school leaders. Two of those programs, the Fisher Fellowship and Miles Family Fellowship (open to both internal and external applicants), assist the KIPP Foundation in identifying teachers who explicitly want to develop the leadership and management skills needed to found and lead new KIPP schools. Both fellowships are one year in length and involve residencies in teaching and leadership roles in KIPP schools along with coaching, professional development, and, in the case of the Fisher Fellowship, coursework at New York University.

Resource 6: Aspire Charter School Teacher Residency Program


Aspire Public Schools, a California-based charter school network, recently developed an innovative, four-year teacher residency program in partnership with the University of the Pacific. Modeled on medical school residencies, Aspire residents receive a master of arts in education and California Preliminary Teaching Credential in their first year while working alongside an Aspire mentor teacher four days per week. In the second and third years, the residents work with instructional coaches and complete an induction program while in charge of their own classes. The third year culminates in completion of the next tier of state certification. In the fourth year, residents have the chance to pursue other career paths with Aspire schools, including lead teacher, mentor teacher, and administrator. Residents receive discounted tuition and an annual stipend during the first year and additional tuition reimbursements depending on length of employment with Aspire Public Schools.
Resource 7: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

Website: http://www.ncate.org

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is an independent accrediting body responsible for accreditation in teacher education. One goal of NCATE is to ensure high-quality teaching throughout a teacher's career. NCATE has designed a three-phase continuum of teacher preparation and development. NCATE works with state officials, ETS, and leaders of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to align standards and assessments throughout each phase of the continuum.

Resource 8: Teacher Advancement Program: Professional Growth and Career Advancement


The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) works to improve the human capital available to schools by bringing talented people into the teaching profession. TAP envisions multiple career paths on which teachers can progress along a continuum of increasingly demanding requirements to become leaders, decision makers, and mentors.

Resource 9: The Effectiveness of the Teacher Advancement Program


As stated previously, the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) provides multiple career paths for teachers. This key element of TAP provides opportunities for teacher advancement without asking them to leave the classroom. Moreover, TAP encourages shared instructional leadership to assist principals in this crucial role. This paper presents an analysis of the impact of TAP teachers and schools on student achievement in six states.
STRATEGY 3: Identify and Create Opportunities for Teacher Leadership

Teacher leaders usually emerge in response to a specific and immediate need. Instead, adopt an intentional approach—one that identifies existing opportunities and works to create new avenues for teacher leadership. This approach may require re-imagining the leadership structure of the school, the organization of staff and teaching teams, and implementation of new programs. Rethink professional development and professional learning communities as moments for teachers to take leadership over the content and trajectory of school improvement and professional growth.

An excellent way to identify and create opportunities for teacher leadership is through distributed leadership. Recent research using data from the Study of Instructional Improvement (SII) explicitly considers distributed leadership models and the role of teacher leaders in implementing instructional change. Specifically, studies of schools implementing Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) find that the introduction of instructional coaches in CSR schools led to significant instructional changes in two of the three CSR models (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Rowan, Correnti, Miller, & Camburn, 2009). Moreover, a subsequent study investigating this linkage argues that the CSR programs prompted increased reflective practice among teachers—a process that allowed teachers to “analyze and make sense of the practices they were being asked to adopt” (Camburn, 2010a, p. 486). Camburn finds that teacher leadership, in the form of embedded opportunities for teachers to collaborate and work with instructional experts, were the lynch pin prompting increased reflective practice among teachers (Camburn, 2010a). In turn, improved instructional practice has been linked to improved student achievement outcomes (Camburn, 2010b).

Given their level of organizational autonomy, charter schools are perhaps the most likely candidates for embracing distributed leadership models. Indeed, distributed leadership was identified as one of the common traits among five high-performing charter schools in Massachusetts: “These five schools rely heavily on what we call home-grown leadership. They promote from within...They have more ‘distributed’ leadership, so that teachers within the organization take on tasks that are part of the leaders’ jobs and this enables them to grow their own leaders” (Katherine K. Merseth, as quoted in Robelen, 2008, p. 9).

Unfortunately, distributed leadership has not been widely embraced by most charter schools. In a recent study of charter schools across six states, Gross (2011) described the freedom to experiment with new leadership arrangements as a door that is “unlocked” by the charter school model, but one that many charter schools have left “unopened.” Only a minority of charter schools in the study had experimented with an alternative, distributed leadership structure (Gross, 2011). The following resources identify a number of areas and strategies for identifying and creating new opportunities for teachers to step into leadership roles.
SUBSTRATEGY 3.1: Think Broadly

**Resource 10: Mobilizing and Motivating Your Staff**


This guide from the Charter Friends National Network offers resources on developing leadership among staff, recruiting and selecting staff, setting goals, coaching and developing staff, evaluating teachers, and providing rewards and other motivation.

**Resource 11: Teacher Leadership Practices**


Research reveals that teacher leadership is practiced in a variety of ways. Sometimes teachers serve in formal leadership positions, and, at other times, leadership is demonstrated in informal ways. This article discusses the ways in which teacher leadership has evolved over time, the levels of leadership work for teacher leaders, and specific domains of teacher leadership practice.

**Resource 12: Building Teacher Leaders Toolkit**


This online video workshop from the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium provides context for teacher leadership in schools and underscores the importance of teachers taking on leadership roles that are not necessarily administrative, such as advocacy for quality curriculum and mentoring peers. The workshop, presented by veteran educators, covers characteristics of successful teacher leaders, points out ways to recognize potential leaders, and discusses leadership styles and theories.

**Resource 13: Ten Roles for Teacher Leaders**


This resource describes ten roles that teacher leaders can assume to help support school and student success: instructional specialist, resource provider, curriculum specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, catalyst for change, and learner.
Resource 14: Teacher Leadership Opportunities

This article identifies ten areas in which teacher leadership is essential to the health of a school. These areas affect teacher and student interactions and are among the domains in which teacher leadership is most needed and least seen.

Resource 15: New Approaches to Teacher Leadership

This article presents three new approaches to teacher leadership that appear to be more effective than formal leadership roles in promoting school improvement:

- **Teacher Research as Leadership.** Teacher inquiry in collaborative contexts can create new opportunities for teachers to learn and to lead efforts to improve their schools.
- **New Models of Distributive Leadership.** These models indicate that teachers can and do perform important leadership tasks inside and outside formal positions of authority.
- **Leadership of Teams.** Self-managed teams promote teacher collaboration, improve teaching and learning, and address problems of school organization.

Resource 16: Innovations in Staffing

In an effort to harness opportunities for large-scale reform, this brief calls for states to lead the structural transformation of schooling, beginning with revolutionizing how they think about, prepare, license, deploy, and support educators. The brief offers a number of possible opportunities for teacher leadership and presents a variety of new roles for teachers in planning and coordinating a student’s education.

Resource 17: Teacher Leadership as a Key to Education Innovation

This brief describes the role of teacher leadership in improving educator quality and provides strategies for educational leaders to develop formal teacher leadership opportunities to attract and retain talented teachers.
Resource 18: Teacher Leadership Roles

This article describes traditional teacher leadership roles including team leaders, department chairs, association leaders, and curriculum developers. The authors discuss the movement to increase teacher professional development to expand teacher leadership roles. This movement is based on the understanding that teachers are in the best position to affect decisions regarding curriculum and instruction and ensure continuity during changes. Further, the advocates for expanded teacher leadership roles are also motivated by the need to attract and retain qualified teachers.

Resource 19: The Role of Teacher Leaders in Shaping School Policies and Programs

Teacher leaders can play a pivotal role in shaping school structures, policies, and programs to maximize student learning. These schoolwide policies and programs fall into the following major categories:

- School organization and structure
- Student policies
- Student programs and activities
- Staff programs

This resource provides examples of how emerging and established teacher leaders can work in specific areas of school organization and structure, student policies, student programs, and staff programs.

Resource 20: Formal and Informal Tasks of Teacher Leaders

This hands-on guide covers tasks, both formal and informal, that all teacher leaders should be aware of, but rarely actually perform. The book offers specific strategies and tools for addressing the following areas of teacher leadership: identifying leadership qualities and team building, enhancing communication and building respect, overcoming obstacles and implementing change, energizing colleagues and strengthening morale, and improving student and teacher achievement. The book includes useful resources like sample letters, surveys, and checklists.
**Resource 21: Turnaround Teacher Teams (T3)**


Boston Public Schools, Unlocking Potential, and Teach Plus partnered to create Turnaround Teacher Teams (T3) that bring teacher leadership and school improvement efforts into concert with one another. The program creates cohorts of highly effective and experienced teachers, supports them in becoming turnaround specialists, and places them in teams in the schools in which they are needed most. The cohort model ensures that the selected teachers are hired and placed in the same school so they make up 25 percent of a school’s staff. Moreover, the selected schools have a supportive principal and provide the teachers with wrap-around services for students and resources for improving instruction, especially access to regular student progress data and expert coaching.

**SUBSTRATEGY 3.2:**

**Incorporate Teacher Leadership Into Professional Development Programs**

**Resource 22: Teacher-Led Professional Development**


This article outlines a successful, large-scale, international teacher-led professional development initiative. The Australian-led project has resulted in cadres of teacher leaders in district schools in the Philippines providing continuous in-school professional development of science teachers. This project was based on acknowledged outstanding practice in professional development and provides a replicable example for educational administrators in design and maintaining a systemwide, long-term professional development program for science teachers.

**Resource 23: Teacher Leadership in Mathematics**


Teacher leaders play an important role in a number of professional development projects of the Center for the Development of Teaching. Many teacher development projects have teacher
leadership components that allow teachers participating in the project to take on leadership roles. In addition, some projects, such as the following, have been used in other settings to build teacher leadership:

- **The Developing Mathematical Ideas (DMI) Leadership Institutes.** Teacher leaders attend the DMI in the summer at Mount Holyoke College and learn how to further the mathematics agenda at their own schools.

- **The Developing Mathematical Ideas (DMI) Network.** Through summer institutes, an electronic network, and an apprenticeship program, selected teacher leaders learn to offer DMI seminars at various sites across the country.

**Resource 24: Resources for Teacher Leaders in Mathematics and Science Reform**


This site provides a compilation of resources for secondary school teachers who plan to assume leadership roles in mathematics and science reform. The resources are intended to support teachers in the following leadership activities: making presentations, writing for publications, reaching out to the community, mentoring and coaching, providing professional development, and supporting preservice education.

**Resource 25: Houston Teachers Institute**


A partnership between the Houston Independent School District and the University of Houston, the Houston Teachers Institute (ended in 2009) was a replication of the Yale University and New Haven, Connecticut, public schools partnership. The Houston model brought teachers and university professors together in designing and implementing professional development opportunities for Houston’s teachers. A small group of teacher leaders acted as links between their school and the Institute, both in getting teachers to attend and in channeling teachers’ needs and interests into the Institute’s planning and content.

**Resource 26: NTC Mentor Professional Development**


The New Teacher Center offers mentor training to experienced teachers who will then provide mentoring and coaching to beginning teachers at their own schools. The Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project BTSA Induction program explicitly includes charter schools. The program is a collaboration between the University of California at Santa Cruz Teacher Education Program, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, 31 districts, and five charter schools in the region. The program provides two years of induction for new teachers and focuses on improving instructional practice, reflective practice, and student achievement. As inductees, teachers receive ongoing mentoring, support, and feedback from veteran teachers.

**SUBSTRATEGY 3.3: Establish Professional Learning Communities**

**Resource 27: Learning Community as Professional Development**


This article describes a small-group process that can be used in professional development to support teacher leadership. The theory is that the development of leadership is more powerful when school staff members work together to foster collective learning. The study’s results indicate that a leadership approach founded in learning communities is central to improving the proficiency of teachers but also in improving school support for quality teaching and leadership.

**Resource 28: Learning-Centered Leadership**


This article describes strategies used by learning-centered leaders, including building professional learning communities. For example, learning-centered leaders of effective schools champion forming learning organizations, cultivate staff cohesion and support, and push for a schoolwide emphasis on communities of professional practice.

**Resource 29: Attributes of School Professional Learning Communities**


In addition to a congenial atmosphere and sense of camaraderie, professional learning communities are characterized by open communication, trust and support, and continuous inquiry and improvement of work. This article explains how building professional learning communities is important in creating opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles and narrow the gap between principals and teachers.
SUBSTRATEGY 3.4:
Promote Participation in Professional Teaching Networks

Resource 30: National Writing Project

The National Writing Project (NWP) is a professional development network that assists primary through university teachers of all subjects in improving student achievement by focusing on the teaching of writing. The network currently has 200 sites, usually hosted by local colleges and universities, which work with area school districts to offer high-quality professional development programs. NWP sites share a national program model; these sites develop a leadership cadre of local teachers, “teacher-consultants,” through summer institutes. In addition, they design and deliver customized inservice programs for local schools, districts, and universities. NWP, through its model of developing teacher leaders, enhances the professionalism of teaching.

Resource 31: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards–Teacher Involvement

This site offers ways in which teachers can become involved in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Resource 32: Teacher Leaders Network (TLN)

The mission of TLN is to promote the powerful potential of teacher leadership and improve student learning by advancing the teaching profession. The TLN site is a good resource for teacher leadership research, community, and support.

SUBSTRATEGY 3.5:
Distribute Leadership Tasks

Resource 33: Distributed Leadership

This document discusses “distributed leadership” as a type of leadership approach for improving school quality and student performance. In this approach, the leadership functions needed in a school are spread across numerous members of the school community. Distributed leadership involves more people in leadership roles in the school system, generates new ideas, and creates a strong team approach to running a school organization. Furthermore, a distributed leadership model builds up teacher engagement through shared decision making.
Resource 34: Planning for Leadership Transitions and New Training and Support Options


This Center on Reinventing Public Education report draws from a six-state survey to identify challenges facing charter school leaders, including facilities, finances, recruitment, and leading strategic planning. Citing leadership succession as a critical issue, the report calls for planning for leadership transitions and new training and support options. Specifically, the report recommends distributing responsibilities for administrative, fundraising, and curriculum-development tasks and providing leadership training to teachers to deepen the pool of talented leadership in charter schools.

Resource 35: Team Leadership


This article on learning-centered leadership discusses the importance of team leadership for enhancing organizational performance. Distributing leadership more generally can help a school organization reach new heights.

Resource 36: Distributed Leadership in High Schools


The distribution of leadership is the key to transforming high schools. A network of distributed practice in which leadership is shared across roles leads to a dynamic interaction between multiple leaders and their situational contexts. With distributed leadership, decisions about who leads and who follows are problem-driven, rather than decided in advance by title or position. Conceptions of distributed leadership involve making the basis for authority a person’s expertise rather than his or her formal position.

Resource 37: New Structure for School Leadership


In this article, Elmore describes the importance of developing a model of distributed leadership for large-scale improvement of instructional practice and performance. He sets forth five
principles that serve as the foundation for a model of distributed leadership focused on large-scale improvement and presents a table defining leadership roles and functions at the policy, professional, system, school, and practice level.

**Resource 38: Distributing and Redesigning Leadership Roles**


This report describes new strategies to redefine school leadership roles such as distributing and redesigning leadership roles. One example is to develop new models of leadership that are based on distributing leadership practice across the school organization and redesigning formal leadership roles.

**Resource 39: Georgia’s Distributed Leadership Framework**


From 2002 to 2006, Georgia’s Leadership Institute for School Improvement defined distributed leadership, as an opportunity for leaders at every level of the school to contribute their unique value and exercise their leadership at the appropriate time to improve student achievement and organizational effectiveness in their school. Participating in distributed leadership allows leadership potential to be developed and recognized. With a variety of options, teachers can choose to remain in the classroom and specialize in the teaching craft or to be trained in one or more of the eight distributed leadership roles, in which they have different responsibilities that contribute to the overall effectiveness of the school.

**Resource 40: Distributed Leadership Model for Preparation Programs**


Leadership preparation programs need a model that supports a flexible distributed leadership approach and makes leadership for school improvement readily adaptable to preparation curriculum. For example, distributed leadership embedded throughout the eight roles of leadership (as identified by Georgia’s Leadership Institute for School Improvement) constitutes a performance-based model that encourages leaders at all levels in schools to work together to improve student learning.
STRATEGY 4:
Encourage Teacher Participation in Leadership Preparation, Training, and Development Programs

All teacher leaders, both new and experienced, need support in the form of training and ongoing development to succeed in their leadership roles. Identify leadership preparation programs in your region or, if applicable, your charter school network, for your teacher leaders and encourage them to participate. The following resources offer an overview of some of the programs currently available.

Resource 41: Teacher Leadership Development at Johns Hopkins


An important feature of the Johns Hopkins Department of Teacher Development and Leadership is the professional development partnership between the College of Education and local school districts. Teacher leadership is an important concept in the Department of Teacher Development and Leadership. In fact, it permeates the entire scope and sequence of programs that prepare new teachers and administrators as well as programs designed to provide experienced teachers with ongoing professional development. The preservice program as well as the master's degree program for experienced teachers emphasizes the idea that leadership in schools is the responsibility of all members of the school community.

Resource 42: Delaware Academy for School Leadership: Teacher Leadership Curriculum


Under a grant from The Wallace Foundation, the Delaware Academy for School Leadership (DASL) developed a publically available curriculum for developing teacher leadership. The curriculum has four courses: (1) developing an understanding of the whole schools; (2) working productively with others; (3) deepening the instructional capacity of colleagues; (4) leading school improvement. DASL can provide professional development based on the curriculum for districts and schools and can customize it based on specific needs.

Resource 43: University of Washington College of Education, Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MIL)

The University of Washington College of Education offers a master of education in instructional leadership program. The program is designed to prepare teachers who want to pursue leadership positions in schools and addresses common challenges that teacher leaders often face. Moreover, the program assists participants in identifying and understanding the variety of new leadership roles that are emerging within schools.

**Resource 44: Master of Arts in Charter School Leadership at Central Michigan University**


Central Michigan University offers a master’s degree program in charter school leadership with a focus on educational leadership. The program is designed for anyone currently working in charter schools, magnet schools, and public school academies but especially for teachers who are seeking advancement.

**Resource 45: Center for Teacher Leadership Development at Virginia Commonwealth University**

Website: http://www.ctl.vcu.edu/

As the website explains, the Center for Teacher Leadership works with accomplished teachers throughout Virginia to achieve the following:

- Promote the concept of teachers as leaders of change.
- Develop more effective teacher leaders through access to information and high-quality training to share the knowledge, experience, and insight of teachers with policymakers and others.

**Resource 46: Teacher Leadership Programs at the Bank Street Leadership Preparation Institute**


The Bank Street GSE’s Leadership Preparation Institute focuses on preparing teachers to lead school improvement efforts in mathematics curriculum and instruction. The 15-credit teacher leadership program in mathematics includes coursework, school-based projects, and professional development opportunities. Tuition support is available through the New York Department of Education.
**Resource 47: Teacher Leaders Learning to Analyze School Data**


This study describes four different approaches that school teacher leaders in 24 elementary and middle schools used for analyzing standardized achievement test scores: comparing to the norm, analyzing trends, correlating data, and disaggregating data. The participating teachers were engaged in graduate coursework in a teacher leadership program at the University of Northern Iowa. Learning how to use student achievement data to improve instruction is important for teacher leaders interested in new, practical approaches to improving student learning.

**Resource 48: Teacher Leadership Development in Douglas County, Colorado**

Douglas County School District Website: https://www.dcsdk12.org/

Unlike university-based degree programs, Colorado’s Douglas County School District teacher leadership development efforts are district based. As part of this teacher leadership initiative, building resource teachers (BRTs) are placed in each school. To make this happen, resources were shifted from supporting centrally assigned content specialists to supporting site-based generalists. The BRTs are well-qualified teacher leaders; each has at least five years of successful teaching in the district, 54 quarter hours of graduate work, and experience in supporting adult learners. One reason for the success of the BRT program is that the BRTs have clearly defined teacher leader roles, including mentor; coach; consultant; liaison with the district; and resource to teachers, principals, parents, and paraprofessionals.

**Resource 49: Austin Independent School District Teacher Leadership Development Program**


The Austin Independent School District Teacher Leadership Development Program is an example of a professional development program provided by a school district for teacher leaders.

**Resource 50: Teacher Leadership Development on School-Based Teams**


This study analyzed the development of the Teachers Academy, a locally initiated network of secondary schools, and its impact on teacher leadership within individual schools. The researcher, using a case study approach, observed, described, and analyzed nine Teachers Academy teams within one school district.
Resource 51: Evaluation of St. Charles Teacher Leader Institute


The state of Louisiana recently amended its certification structure to include a new category, Teacher Leader, and commissioned several pilot projects to design, implement, and evaluate a teacher leader curriculum leading to eligibility for this certificate. This paper is an evaluation of one of these pilots, the St. Charles Teacher Leadership Institute, a partnership program between St. Charles Parish Public Schools, local leaders in business and industry, and the College of Education and Human Development at the University of New Orleans.

Resource 52: Developing Teacher Leaders


Two WestEd projects seek to enhance the role of teachers in leading educational reform: WestEd’s Instructional Leadership Initiative and WestEd’s Leadership Curriculum for Mathematics Professional Development (Mathematics Renaissance). Using these projects as examples, this article explains the importance of teacher leadership to education reform.

Resource 53: Teacher Leadership Project


This report is an evaluation of the Teacher Leadership Project (TLP), funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to provide leadership and technology training as well as computer equipment to teachers in Washington State. The TLP was designed to assist teachers in their efforts to integrate technology into the school curriculum. The program also helped teachers to provide their colleagues with technology expertise and leadership. An initial cohort of 27 teachers developed the program in 1997 for other teachers. Between 1998 and 2003, an additional 3,387 teachers across the state of Washington were awarded TLP grants.

The findings of this study suggest that this program was an effective model of professional development. The participants valued the program, which was based on “teachers teaching teachers,” as the instructors had actually been in the classroom. In addition, the teachers responded that the following elements were all positive aspects of the TLP: in-depth, hands-on training; leadership development; access to technology; a focus on curriculum; on-the-job training; collaboration; and reflection. The report concluded that the TLP was a remarkably effective training program.
Resource 54: The Maine School Leadership Network


Principals and teacher leaders in Maine have the opportunity to participate in a two-year leadership training program, the Maine School Leadership Network (MSLN). Maine’s teacher and administrator associations, business leaders, and university system joined together to create the Maine School Leadership Network. This program “combines individual coaching, reflection on practice, and a ‘community of learners’ network to support the efforts of principals and teacher leaders to develop effective and sustainable leadership for Maine’s schools” (p. 539).

Resource 55: Improving Charter School Leadership


This issue brief from the National Governors Association identifies policy approaches to increase the number and quality of charter school leaders, including supporting training programs and partnerships, providing benefits for charter school staff, and supporting charter school board member training.

The brief also details a number of leadership training programs focused on “growing your own” leaders by promoting teachers.

Resource 56: Leading Educators


Leading Educators (www.leadingeducators.org) began in 2008 as a partnership between three organizations: the U.K.-based Teacher Leaders, FirstLine Charter Schools in New Orleans, and New Leaders for New Schools in New York City. Leading Educators assists schools in developing teacher leaders through the Leading Educators Fellowship, a two-year program that assists participating teachers in developing leadership skills in the following areas: school culture, leadership and management, and learning and teaching.

The program, designed for teachers already working in the highest need schools, focuses heavily on improving student achievement and changing school cultures. Fellows engage in the following: (1) intensive summer professional development sessions and year-round weekend sessions on a monthly basis; (2) problem-solving committees, which meet monthly to share and receive help with leadership challenges; (3) a supportive relationship with a dedicated leadership coach; (4) annual visits to exemplary open admission schools “with a proven track record of closing the achievement gap for underserved students”; (5) a two-year school impact project aimed at improving the achievement of a target group and developing the leadership skills of fellow teachers. Initially focused on charter schools in New Orleans, the program is currently expanding nationwide by partnering with a variety of schools, districts, networks, and school support organizations.
STRATEGY 5:
Enhance the Professionalism of Teachers and Teaching

Professional teaching standards, certifications, and networks all contribute to the recognition and elevation of teaching as a professional vocation. Efforts to include leadership criteria in teaching standards, state and national certifications, and within professional teaching networks are central to institutionalizing teacher leadership. Incorporate teacher leadership expectations into your school’s teacher standards and include leadership criteria in teacher evaluation systems. Encourage teachers to seek out National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification and to participate in professional networks.

Resource 57: Teacher Leader Model Standards

The Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium includes a wide variety of education organizations, state education agencies, teacher leaders, principal leaders, and institutions of higher education. The Consortium recently drafted model standards for teacher leaders. The purpose of model standards is to create a dialogue among education leaders about the knowledge, skills, and competencies required of teachers to become leaders at multiple levels. The standards have a format similar to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium State Standards for School Leaders and incorporate domains and performance indicators.

Resource 58: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
Website: http://www.nbpts.org/


The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created in 1987 after the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy’s Task Force on Teaching as a Profession released A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century. After this release, NBPTS issued its first policy statement: What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do, which set forth the NBPTS vision for accomplished teaching. The Five Core Propositions, which are found on this website, “form the foundation and frame the rich amalgam of knowledge, skills, dispositions and beliefs that characterize National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).” These propositions, with an emphasis on modeling, collaboration, learning communities, leadership, instructional policy, curriculum development, staff development, and evaluation of school progress, describe not only accomplished teachers but also effective teacher leaders.
**Resource 59: Leadership Standards That Support Collaborative Leadership**


The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Educational Leadership Policy Standards support a collaborative approach to school leadership, an important endorsement for teacher leadership and teacher professionalization.

**Resource 60: Professional Recognition for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification**


As pointed out in this source on teacher leadership, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification is considered important professional recognition. The nationally applicable NBPTS qualifications and procedures for teacher certification are rigorous yet sensible. Those who successfully complete the certification process are widely recognized as having all the attributes of top-flight teachers. In fact, the 55,000 who have completed this process (since 1987) are recognized and received practical rewards through increased pay, advisory roles, and the chance to be role models for colleagues.

**Resource 61: National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future**

Website: http://www.nctaf.org/

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) is focused on encouraging and rewarding career-long development. This site has resources to implement the following NCTAF strategies:

- Create strong learning communities.
- Assure quality teacher preparation.
- Support professionally rewarding careers.

**Resource 62: Fulfilling the Dream of Teaching: A Professionally Rewarding Career**


This report discusses efforts to retain, develop, support, and reward teachers to make the dream of having highly qualified teachers in every classroom a reality.
Resource 63: Investing in Quality Teaching


This report covers the progress made in implementing strategies for improving teaching standards and teacher professional development as recommended in the earlier report by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future.

Resource 64: State-License Endorsements Recognize Teacher Leaders


The article identifies a small number of U.S. states that are certifying teacher leaders in an effort to provide formal recognition to these important roles. The article notes that most educators seem to view the endorsement as an end in itself, rather than as a route to principal positions.

Resource 65: Teachers Network Leadership Institute

Website: http://www.teachersnetwork.org/tnli/index.htm

The purpose of the Teachers Network Leadership Institute is to bring teachers’ views into education policymaking with the intention of improving student achievement. The network has hundreds of teachers in 14 nationwide affiliates. Teachers who participate in the network use action research to bring their expertise into education policy.

Resource 66: Redefining Leadership Roles


Recent attention has focused on the structure, timing, and content of leadership preparation and alternative ways that leaders can be recruited and inducted into the work of leading schools. This renewed attention has led to considering approaches to developing and defining teacher leadership, particularly through national standards similar to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification process.
STRATEGY 6: 
Create a Supportive School Environment for Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership thrives in a supportive environment. Without a shared understanding of teacher leadership across students, staff, and administrators, teacher leaders often experience isolation and a lack of cooperation and support. Transforming school culture to embrace and encourage teachers to step out and lead takes planning and effort. Principals play a crucial role in facilitating this transformation by creating shared understandings and expectations, recognizing teacher leaders, and encouraging positive faculty relationships.

SUBSTRATEGY 6.1: 
Transform School Culture

Resource 67: Supportive School Culture


One way to address underlying problems in a school culture in which teachers do not perceive their principals as good listeners is to create a decision-making team that includes teachers in the school leadership process.


The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: An Examination of School Leadership and other research on effective leadership indicate the need for leaders to create a culture that does the following:

- Engages teachers in meaningful ways.
- Engages the community and parents in meaningful ways.
- Focuses and aligns school improvement strategies that create a culture of learning for every member of the school community—students, parents, teachers, and principals.

Resource 68: Coaching Teachers to Be Leaders: What Is Teacher Leadership?


As one part in a nine-part series by Ellen Cortez-Ford on teacher leadership, this section provides practical strategies on guiding and negotiating school-wide conversations about the meaning of teacher leadership in an effort to build a shared understanding of teacher leadership across school staff.
Resource 69: Roles and Relationships That Support Teacher Leadership


Research suggests that the following roles and relationships support teacher leadership:

- Colleagues recognize and respect teacher leaders as teachers with subject area expertise.
- High trust and positive working conditions prevail among peers and administrators.
- Assignment of teacher leadership work is central to the teaching and learning process, as opposed to administrative or management tasks.
- Recognition of ambiguity and difficulty in teacher leadership roles.
- Principal support for teacher leadership through formal structures, informal behaviors, coaching, and feedback.
- Clarity about teacher leader and administrator leadership domains, including common ground.
- Attention to interpersonal aspects of the relationship between teacher leader and principal.

Resource 70: Teacher Working Conditions Matter


This resource details the findings of a survey of teacher working conditions in North Carolina and South Carolina.

SUBSTRATEGY 6.2: Recognize Teacher Leaders

Resource 71: Principal Recognition of Teacher Innovation and Expertise


Recognition of teacher innovation and expertise is important for the development of teacher leadership. The principal is uniquely positioned to place the spotlight on teachers who introduce innovative quality instructional practices and exhibit leadership. Moreover, the principal is well positioned to encourage teachers to follow other teachers’ examples. Genuine praise is a simple but powerful strategy that is more important than money. Effective leaders use rituals, ceremonies, and stories. Opportunities for teacher recognition and celebrating student success are critical to creating a culture for teacher leadership.
Resource 72: Verbal Support, Appreciation, and Thanks


Teachers report that the most important motivating force behind their work as teacher leaders is the appreciation they receive from others. The teachers in the study gave the following examples of verbal support, including “expression of appreciation,” “recognition for work done,” “saying thank you for how well the job is going,” and “lots of kudos.”

**SUBSTRATEGY 6.3:**
**Promote Principal Support and Preparation**

Resource 73: The Principal’s Influence on Teacher Leadership


The principal has a disproportionate influence on teacher leadership. Even though some principals find it risky to share leadership, many do find ways to inspire a culture of teacher leadership within their schools. This piece offers actions for how principals can support and influence the success of teacher leaders.

Resource 74: Facilitating Principals’ Support for Teacher Leadership


Teacher leaders need support from principals. The evidence from this study of the conditions that lead elementary principals to support the work of teacher leaders suggests that upper level administration can influence principal support by communicating more about teacher leadership roles. The research findings suggest that through better communication, districts (and charter management organizations) can build knowledge of teacher leadership and foster principal-teacher leader interaction as a way to promote support of teacher leaders.

This research study found that high levels of teacher leadership knowledge and interaction with teacher-leaders can promote principals’ support for teacher leadership. Principal preparation programs can increase principals’ knowledge through a focus on teacher leadership, its purpose, and the principal’s relationship to the role.

Resource 75: Principal Support of Teacher Leaders


This resource offers eight strategies for how principals can encourage and support teacher leaders and school-based coaches.
Resource 76: The Development of Principals Who Support Teacher Leadership


More consideration of the intentional development of principals who effectively support teacher leadership is needed. Prospective administrators should be prepared to engage in collaborative, interactive forms of leadership, as well as “dynamic leadership” and ongoing professional development. The authors argue that principals need to conceive of their role as something greater than instructional leadership and more as a cultivator of a community of leaders.
REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE: KNOWLEDGE IS POWER PROGRAM (KIPP) TEACHER LEADER PROGRAM

The Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) charter school network developed a Teacher Leader Program (http://www.kipp.org/school-leaders/leadership-programs/teacher-leader) to support teachers in KIPP schools who are taking on leadership roles and responsibilities and need training to develop useful skills, strategies, and supports. The KIPP network offers teachers a variety of leadership positions including grade-level chair, department or content chair, Saturday school coordinator, or field lesson coordinator. The Teacher Leadership program offers two strands of programming for teachers to select. The first strand, “Research for Better Teaching: Studying Skillful Teaching,” focuses on enhancing teachers’ knowledge of research-based practices instruction. The second strand, “Team Leadership and Management: Successful Strategies for Leading Your Grade Level, Team, or Department,” focuses on a set of practical leadership skills and strategies.

As with all its leadership programs, the KIPP Teacher Leader Program is organized around the KIPP network’s Leadership Competency Model (http://www.kipp.org/school-leaders/leadership-competencies). Placing students at the center of the model, the Competency Model is organized around three areas: Building Relationships, Driving Results, and Managing People. For teacher leaders, the specific competencies and skills highlighted in the program range from leading effective meetings and teacher conferences to developing action plans, managing teams, and problem-solving with fellow members of their teacher leadership program.

The program provides a combination of programmatic opportunities like leadership development retreats twice per year and monthly professional development calls with university professors and an online community of practice for the cohort. In addition, participants receive individualized coaching from their supervising school leader. At the conclusion of the program, participants are eligible for additional leadership programs, including the Milken Family Fellowship.
REFERENCES


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**


ABOUT THE NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTER

The U.S. Department of Education is committed to promoting effective practices, providing technical assistance, and disseminating the resources critical to ensuring the success of charter schools across the country. To that end, the U.S. Department of Education, under a contract with Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research, has developed the National Charter School Resource Center. The Resource Center provides on-demand resources, information, and technical assistance to support successful planning, authorizing, implementation, and sustainability of high-quality charter schools; to share evaluations on the effects of charter schools; and to disseminate information about successful practices in charter schools.