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TEACHER & SCHOOL LEADER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Guide to Creating Teacher Leader Positions

White **Paper**

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Introduction

The past several years have seen a growing interest in, and adoption of, Teacher Leader (TL) programs throughout the country and among TIF 4 grantees. Often, these programs have been embedded within large-scale career ladder compensation systems. Several recent writings describe this recent growth surge, design issues in the creation of a total TL program, and examples of TL programs (Jacques, Weber, Bosso, Olson, & Bassett, 2016; Kraemer, 2016; Natalie, Gaddis, Bassett, & McKnight, 2016; Pyatigorsky, Heneman, Steel, Finster, & Milanowski, 2016; Wenner & Campbell, 2016; Milanowski & Miller, 2014).

Four examples from TIF 4 grantees illustrate these TL programs, created within the performance-based compensation system and strategic human capital management systems requirements for TIF 4. The Aspire Schools, a network of CA charter schools, designed a career path system for highly effective teachers that includes two major positions: model teacher and mentor teacher. Both positions have multiple tasks and responsibilities; they receive annual stipends of $1,000 and $3,000, respectively. Denver created LEAP (Leading Effective Academic Practice) as a strategic five-year growth and performance system focused on both teachers and TLs. TLs serve part time (released time from teaching) as instructional leaders in their schools. As TLs, they support teacher teams through coaching, co-planning lessons, observing instruction, and providing performance feedback. TLs may advance to Senior TL, with a stipend increase. At Washoe County (Reno/Sparks, NV) there is a career lattice structure for TLs, with three levels of advancement: Site Mentor TL (stipend of $5,000), Site Master TL (stipend of $7,000), and TIF District Master TL (stipend of $10,000). The Mentor and Master TLs focus on such tasks as coaching teachers, modeling instructional practice, creating model classrooms, and creating and modeling professional development and learning communities. District master TLs train and support the site Master and Mentor TLs, collaborate with principals, and work with various instructional staff to ensure alignment of content, practice, and communication. Finally, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) is partnering with schools in three states that have implemented the TAP (Teacher Advancement Model). In the TAP model, there are master and mentor teachers at the site level, each assigned to a cluster of teachers. There is salary augmentation for each position, determined at the site level.

In this Guide, we focus on creating individual TL positions, not on creating a TL program as a whole. We assume that a decision has already been made to create TLs and that the task is to determine the specifics of the TL roles. The individual TL position is the foundation and building block of a TL program. Without effective creation of TL positions, there cannot be effective TL programs. So this guide could also be used as part of a larger evaluation of a TL program and its positions.

Creation of a TL position revolves around several decisions, starting with making choices about the district's instructional improvement strategies. From this flow decisions about major instructional tasks and subtasks to support the strategy, assignment of the tasks and subtasks to the TL position and other positions, description of the new TL position, allocation of hours to the position, staffing and training for the TL position, and elements of the TL appointment.

Definition of a Teacher Leader

To create a TL position, it is first important to have in mind a definition of a TL. In this guide, we use the following definition: A TL is a position at the school level that allows a teacher to voluntarily be selected for part-time released duties in order to serve as an instructional leader focused on improving instructional practices in the school. This definition is consistent with the TIF 4 framework on career ladders and positions: Career ladder positions are school-based instructional leadership positions designed to improve instructional practice, which teachers may voluntarily accept, such as positions described as master teacher, mentor teacher, demonstration or model teacher, or instructional coach, and for which teachers are selected based on criteria that are predictive of their ability to lead other teachers.

Note that the TL definition requires the TL position to allow teachers to remain in the classroom while assuming the new leadership responsibilities, thus being both a teacher and a leader. Full-time specialists and administrators are not considered TLs for the purposes of this guide. And ideally, the TL position includes a bare minimum of administrative duties outside of those closely connected with improving instruction (though some may be necessary).

Note also that the use of TLs is only one path to follow in seeking to improve instruction. There are alternatives or additions that we just mention here: creation of a new administrative support person for the principal, thus allowing the principal increased time for a focus on instructional improvement, placing more of the principal's administrative duties in the hands of the assistant principal, full-time instructional coaches, or large-scale district-provided professional development on content or pedagogy.

Theory of Action for Use of the Teacher Leader Position

The basic theory of action connecting teacher leadership to instructional improvement, improved student achievement, and more equitable assess to effective instruction has two aspects, both shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Theory of action for teacher leaders

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┌─────────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐
│           TLs           │    │ Peer teachers       │    │ Improved            │    │ Improved            │
│                         │    │ receive support and │    │ instructional       │    │ Student             │
│ Roles                   │    │ encouragement to    │───▶│ practice of         │───▶│ Achievement         │
│  – Mentoring new        │───▶│ work on improving   │    │ teachers working    │    │                     │
│    teachers             │    │ practice            │    │ with TLs            │    │                     │
│  – Modeling effective   │    └─────────────────────┘    └─────────────────────┘    └─────────────────────┘
│    practices            │
│  – Coaching struggling  │
│    teachers             │
│  – Leading school-/team-│    ┌─────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────┐
│    level professional   │    │ TLs perceive their  │    │ Improved            │    │ More equitable      │
│    development          │───▶│ jobs as more        │───▶│ retention of TLs    │───▶│ student access      │
│ Additional compensation │    │ attractive          │    │                     │    │ to effective        │
│ Recognition             │    └─────────────────────┘    └─────────────────────┘    │ instruction         │
│ Greater job variety     │                                                          └─────────────────────┘
│ Opportunity for skill   │
│ development             │
│ Greater task variety    │
└─────────────────────────┘
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First, TLs formally or informally influence their teaching colleagues to engage in efforts to improve instructional practice. They could do this through a variety of activities, including modeling, mentoring, coaching, sharing resources, organizing study groups, or observing colleagues' practice and providing feedback. Second, teacher leadership positions provide TLs with additional rewards, recognition, job variety, and development opportunities that make remaining a classroom teacher more attractive to them. If TL positions are provided to effective, or better, highly effective teachers, retention of these teachers will improve, positively affecting both the equity of student access to effective instruction and student achievement. There are other variations on this theory of action, and districts should be clear on how they expect TLs to contribute to equitable access and improving student achievement before they begin the decision process leading to defining TL roles.

Key Decisions for Creating a Teacher Leader Position

This guide shows how a TL position could be created by a process with 10 decision points. Going through the decision process will help to better define the nature and scope of the TL position, identify others who may also work with the TL on instructional improvement tasks, guide creation of TL staffing and training requirements, and specify the content of the actual TL appointment.

1. *What Are the District's Instructional Improvement Strategies?*

There must be clarity around the district's instructional improvement strategies before creating a TL position, for the nature of the position depends on the nature of that strategy. It is thus critical that the district first decide its instructional improvement strategies. Examples of possibilities include:

- Improving Teacher Performance Competencies
- Improving Curriculum Content Areas
- Improving Specific Teacher Skills
- Improving Teacher Quality Through Recruitment and Retention

A. Improving Teacher Performance Competencies

The teacher evaluation and support systems TIF requires grantees to develop and implement are typically based on general performance competencies like those found in models such as the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT) (2013) or the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (2013). These models include multiple components that represent general teacher performance competencies. Some or all of these competencies could be targeted for improvement as a way of driving instructional improvement.

B. Improving Curriculum Content Areas

Test score and student learning objective (SLO) data may suggest student performance (proficiency or growth) requires improvement in certain content areas, such as reading, mathematics, or science. Improving performance in these areas may require changing the curriculum and improving teachers' content-specific pedagogy.

C.   Improving Specific Teacher Skills

The district may decide to focus on specific practices that it believes have high leverage to improve student achievement. This could require improving teacher skills of narrower scope than the general performance competencies underlying the teacher evaluation system, though they might also be embedded within them. Examples include interpretation and use of student test score and SLO information, and teamwork skills for working in professional learning communities. Both of these skills are required in the Framework for Teaching and other evaluation rubrics.

D.   Improving Teacher Quality Through Recruitment and Retention

Teacher recruitment and selection could be honed by various actions such as identifying and using new recruitment sources, improving the candidate's experience, better informing the candidate about the job and co-workers, and developing more valid selection techniques such as actual classroom presentations or competency-based interviews (Heneman, Judge, & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2015). Initiatives could also be taken on to improve working conditions, foster greater teacher participation in decision making, and training principals in sound and equitable performance management practices.

While there are many other strategies districts could decide to use, the above are short-hand examples that suggest that different strategies require different tasks and duties for the TL position. To ensure that the TL positions to be created will most effectively support the strategies, districts should identify and describe their major strategies as a first step in designing TL positions.

2.   *What Are Major Instructional Improvement Tasks Associated With the District's Strategy?*

The goal here is to take each instructional improvement strategy and identify the major tasks that will have to be undertaken to drive the strategy forward. At this point, decisions about who will perform those tasks are not made.

As an example, consider strategy one above: improving teacher performance competencies. Assume that two years ago, a district adopted the FFT to become its new teacher evaluation system. Also assume that for the first two years, the district and its schools simply focused on the basics of implementation of the system and educators' comfort with it. Formative evaluation findings have shown that while teachers and principals are complying with the process, the competencies underlying it are not well understood, and not much is being done at the school level to help teachers develop. The district thus decides that there must be heightened focus on understanding and use of the FFT and the feedback results it can provide about teachers'

instructional performance. Rather than attempting to drive such change only from the district level, the district recognizes that drivers at the school level are also needed.

District administrators begin down this path by creating a special project team composed of people from the TIF project advisory committee and district professional development and human resource staff. Based on the project team's recommendations, the district decides there are six major instructional improvement tasks that need to be carried out to improve the teacher performance competencies:

1. Enhance teachers' knowledge of all of the FFT components and scoring rubrics.
2. Conduct announced and unannounced observations of teaching.
3. Translate observations into performance rating scores and provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses.
4. Model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric level.
5. Develop and provide competency-focused, job-embedded professional development.
6. Create and support teacher learning teams.

The district believes that these six major tasks make good instructional strategy sense, and that teacher leadership could play an important role. The district also decides that the tasks need to be explicitly assigned to different roles along with responsibility for their completion.

3.   Who Will Perform Each of the Major Tasks?

The project team now reviews the tasks and decides which roles, including principals, TLs, and district central office staff, should undertake the major tasks. It is clear that no one role should be responsible for all the tasks, but that some should be shared. The team agrees that the major tasks should be allocated as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Allocation of instructional improvement strategy tasks to roles

Role	Major tasks					
	1. Enhance teachers' knowledge of evaluation system components and rubrics	2. Conduct announced and unannounced observations of teachers	3. Translate observations into ratings and provide feedback about strengths & weaknesses	4. Model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric levels	5. Develop and provide competency-focused, job-embedded professional development	6. Create and support teacher learning teams
Principal	X	X	X			X
TL	X	X	X	X	X	X
Director of HR	X					
Director of PD	X				X	

4. How Will Each Major Task Be Divided Into Subtasks?

After assignment of roles to the major tasks, it is clear that with one exception (task 4), more than one role will be involved in each task. So, each task needs to be divided into the subtasks that individuals occupying each role will be responsible for. The project team meets to identify the subtasks for each major task, with a rule there can be no more than three subtasks for each task. In a one-hour meeting they identify and agree on the following subtasks:

- Task 1: Enhance teachers' knowledge of all of the evaluation system components and scoring rubrics.
  Subtasks:
  1a. Develop materials that provide examples of teaching at all rubric levels and describe how specific behaviors fit rubric definitions and justify scoring at each level.
  1b. Answer teachers' questions about the meanings of rubric terms, how evidence is collected, and how ratings are made.
  1c. Encourage teachers to use the rubrics to assess and reflect on their own teaching.

- Task 2: Conduct announced and unannounced observations of teaching.
  Subtasks:
  2a. Develop a schedule of observations that ensures all teachers have the agreed-on number of both announced and unannounced observations before the end of the school year.
  2b. Hold preconference with teacher to collect information about the class and lesson to be observed and collect relevant artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, student work samples).
  2c. Observe teacher practice, record observations, and collect relevant artifacts.

- Task 3: Translate observations into performance rating scores and provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses.
  Subtasks:
  3a. Decide which rubric levels best describe the teacher's practice, using evidence collected at preconference and during observations.
  3b. Complete rating form, summarizing the evidence used to make the rating decision; identify an area of strength and an area that could be improved.
  3c. Meet with teachers to share ratings and areas of strength and improvement, describe the evidence for the ratings made, and solicit teachers' reflection on the ratings and areas of strength and improvement.

- Task 4: Model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric level.
  Subtasks:
  4a. Suggest practices or materials teachers could try in order to address areas of improvement.
  4b. Demonstrate how to use materials or practices in the teacher's own classroom or by inviting teacher to observe in another classroom.
  4c. Observe teachers applying new practices or using new materials and provide feedback.

- Task 5: Develop and provide competency-focused, job-embedded professional development.

  Subtasks:

  5a. Review observation ratings and evidence to identify areas of strength and improvement common to teachers at the grade, subject, and school levels.

  5b. Identify potential development methods, providers, and schedules for individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development.

  5c. Plan and conduct individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development sessions focused on areas of improvement.

- Task 6: Create and support teacher learning teams.

  Subtasks:

  6a. Identify teachers with common areas of improvement as potential teams and teachers with similar areas of strength as potential resources for teams.

  6b. Assist teachers in analyzing ratings and evidence, identifying possible practice changes, sharing resources, and planning how and when to try new practices.

  6c. Facilitate teams by scheduling meetings, drafting agendas, locating resources, and recording team activities.

5. *Who Will Perform Each of the Subtasks?*

On reviewing and discussing the subtasks, it becomes clear which roles would be responsible for each. The assignment of subtasks and responsibility for them that emerges from the discussion is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Assignment of instructional improvement strategy subtasks to roles

Subtask	Responsibility			
	Principal	TL	Director of HR	Director of PD
1a. Develop materials that provide examples of teaching at all rubric levels and describe how specific behaviors fit rubric definitions and justify scoring at each level.			X	X
1b. Answer teachers' questions about the meanings of rubric terms, how evidence is collected, and how ratings are made.		X	X	X
1c. Encourage teachers to use the rubrics to assess and reflect on their own teaching.	X	X		
2a. Develop a schedule of observations that ensures all teachers have the agreed-on number of both announced and unannounced observations before the end of the school year.	X			
2b. Hold preconference with teacher to collect information about the class and lesson to be observed and collect relevant artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, student work samples).	X	X		
2c. Observe teacher practice, record observations, and collect relevant artifacts.	X	X		

Table 2. Assignment of instructional improvement strategy subtasks to roles—Continued

Subtask	Responsibility			
	Principal	TL	Director of HR	Director of PD
3a. Decide which rubric levels best describe the teacher's practice, using evidence collected at preconference & during observations.	X	X		
3b. Complete rating form, summarizing the evidence used to make the rating decision; identify an area of strength and an area that could be improved.	X	X		
3c. Meet with teachers to share ratings and areas of strength and improvement, describe the evidence for the ratings made, and solicit teachers' reflection on the ratings and areas of strength and improvement.	X	X		
4a. Suggest practices or materials teachers could try in order to address areas of improvement.	X	X		
4b. Demonstrate how to use materials or practices in the teacher's own classroom or by inviting teacher to observe in another classroom.		X		
4c. Observe teachers applying new practices or using new materials and provide feedback.		X		
5a. Review observation ratings and evidence to identify areas of strength and improvement common to teachers at the grade, subject, and school levels.	X			
5b. Identify potential development methods, providers, and schedules for individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development.	X			X
5c. Plan and conduct individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development sessions focused on areas of improvement.	X	X		
6a. Identify teachers with common areas of improvement as potential teams and teachers with similar areas of strength as potential resources for teams.	X			
6b. Assist teachers in analyzing ratings and evidence, identifying possible practice changes, sharing resources, and planning how and when to try new practices.		X		
6c. Facilitate teams by scheduling meetings, drafting agendas, locating resources, and recording team activities.		X		

6.   What Are the Final Tasks for the Teacher Leader Position?

The results in the step above indicate what major tasks and subtasks will become part of the TL position. The project team may want to add the possibility that principals will add other tasks at the school level, so long as these are compatible with the basic emphasis on the instructional improvement strategy the position was designed to support. Based on input from principals, the group decides to allow some percentage of the TL's time to be designated for tasks determined at the school level.

7. How Many Hours Will Be Allocated to the Position and the Tasks?

After establishing the tasks for the TL position, it is necessary to determine how many hours/week the TL will serve both during and outside school hours, and the average hours (or percentage of time) that should be spent on each task. There is no standard or "best practice" time allocation to the TL position. The typical range is 3 to 20 hours per week, with the major share of hours being during school hours.

At least three factors should be considered when deciding the number of hours for the position: the degree of challenge in the tasks, the likely impacts on teachers, and affordability.

To continue the example from above, the project team recognizes that the TL tasks are often complex and challenging since they cover the full range of the competencies underlying the evaluation rubric. Given the wide scope of learning required for the typical teacher to begin to improve competencies, the team reasons that the TL will need to spend considerable time with teachers, alone or in groups, in order to have a competency-improving impact on them. The team tentatively decides that there should be 13 hours/week for the TL position, with 11 (85%) of those during school hours. The team then tackles the issue of affordability: will the district budget, including TIF funds and any other special funding, be sufficient to cover the 11 hours/week of released time for the TL? And will this be sustainable in the long run so the TL position can continue? After an analysis of these questions, the team decides that 13 hours/week is affordable now. Moreover, to sustain the TL position past the TIF grant, as teaching positions become vacant, some will be converted into part-time positions, with the remaining portions designated for TL positions in the future.

The team then ponders how many hours (or periods) on average the TL should be expected to spend on each task in a typical week. They decide to allocate the TL time as shown in Table 3.

Table 3.   Time allocation for Teacher Leader position

Task	Time allocation	
	Periods	**Percentage**
Teaching	20 per week	53
Teaching preparation	5 per week	13
Teacher Leadership tasks		
Enhance teachers' knowledge of all of the evaluation system components and scoring rubrics	1 period per week	3
Conduct planned observations of teaching	1 per week	3
Translate observations into performance rating scores and provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses	1 per week	3
Model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric level	2 per week	5
Develop and provide competency-focused, job-embedded professional development	2 per week	5
Support teacher learning teams	4 per week	11
Participate in meetings with school leadership team outside of normal school day	2 per week	5
Total periods	38 per week	100
Total release time	11 per week	31

8. What Will Be the Final Position Description and Approval for It?

The major tasks, subtasks, total hours, and hours allocated to each major task will be written into a position description. This document will have many uses, including developing staffing and training plans for the position and serving as a basis for discussion between the principal and the TL.

The project team signs off on the position description. The director of curriculum and Instruction and the superintendent must also approve.

Appendix 1 shows an example position description based on the allocation of subtasks and time discussed above.

9. How Will the Position Description Be Used for Teacher Leader Staffing and Training?

The position description can be used as a guide to indicating required qualifications for the position, to develop a selection plan, and to help identify training necessary for the newly hired TL (Heneman, Judge, & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2015).

In terms of staffing, qualifications for the TL position should address the KSAOs (knowledge, skill, ability, and other characteristics) necessary for successful performance of the job. This would include training and experience requirements, as well as requirements related to teaching effectiveness. Any licensing or other legal requirements should also be included.

The qualifications should then serve as a guide to developing a selection plan. In that plan, each qualification is considered separately, with an indication of whether it is necessary at the time of hire or can be acquired once on the job. For qualifications required at the time of hire, the method by which they will be assessed during the recruitment/selection process must be determined. The assessment methods could range from specific experience requirements to knowledge or ability tests to work samples (such as instructional delivery, coaching, providing feedback).

Qualifications not necessary at the time of hire should then be targeted for training and development. Here it will be necessary to figure out which training and development should be provided to the new hire prior to beginning on the job, as opposed to once the person is on the job. From this basic decision point, training and development plans can be drawn up.

10. What Should Be Included in a Teacher Leader Appointment Letter?

The TL appointment letter specifies the terms of the appointment for a newly hired TL. It is very similar to a job offer letter and indeed should be included with any formal job offer. We discourage any casual or unwritten "shared understanding" job offers and appointment agreements. It is best to indicate the terms of

employment upfront to avoid possible misinterpretation and controversy later on (Heneman, Judge, & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2015).

Here is a list of factors to consider placing in the TL appointment letter (others can be added):

- Job title
- Length of appointment (starting and ending dates) and renewal possibilities
- Hours each week (or percentage appointment) to be spent on TL tasks (i.e., released time) during and outside school hours
- Supervisor
- Major tasks and subtasks, including time to be spent on each
- Released time and the weekly TL schedule, including replacement
- Vacation and summer hours expectations
- Compensation: stipend or addition to base salary, amount, retirement credit
- Supplements to be provided (e.g., training materials budget, travel allowance)
- Performance evaluation: performance standards/criteria, evaluator(s), process
- Possible career progression

At the end of the 10 decision points a carefully crafted TL position has been created with clear requirements and expectations and that will serve to drive instructional improvement. The TL position description and letter of appointment will be useful to many—the TL, other teachers, the principal, and the TL supervisor—over the course of the TL appointment.

We now turn to two other factors that should be considered when creating a TL position: the process that will be used and the sustainability of the position. Both were briefly incorporated into the decision example above to show how integral they are to TL position creation.

Process Concerns

The 10 decision points above describe a coherent process to guide the creation of TL positions. There are four major process concerns for a district: district and school roles, position creation project team, teacher and principal associations, and approval of the final position description.

TL programs are created at the district (or area) level, even if only a subset of all the schools are included in the initiative. Individual schools could also play a role through having members on the project team (see below) and by serving as a sounding board for the team as it progresses. In addition, schools might be permitted some degree of latitude in amending the position description to fit the school context.

The overall team that guides creation of the TL program may serve as the group that creates the position description, or a special subgroup might be created for that purpose. The project team that defines the TL position should include members with differing expertise in instructional and leadership roles. This should

include instructional administrators, human resources, and school-level administrators and instructional staff. Such diversity of expertise will help ensure that the position description will be thorough in content and broad in acceptability.

Where teacher and or principal associations exist, members of those associations should be asked to be members of the project team. This will allow for additional expertise, enhance teacher and principal voice in the 10-step decision-making process, and facilitate communication about the TL program and position description to teachers and principals.

Multiple approvals of the TL position description are likely necessary. In addition to the obvious approval of the team itself, approvals may be necessary from other district individuals, association leaders (such as in a memorandum of understanding), the superintendent, and even the school board. Given the staffing and budget implications of the TL position, these multiple approvals are understandable.

Sustainability of the Teacher Leader Position

The sustainability of the TL position (and the TL program) should not be an afterthought, but rather part of the strategic planning for the position. That was illustrated above in decision 7, where it was decided that to sustain the TL position after TIF 4 funding, some full-time teaching position vacancies would be converted to part-time ones, with the freed-up funds designated to supporting the TL positions.

Districts may also want to consider reallocation of funding from other programs. Several studies have suggested that districts may spend considerable amounts on professional development without fully recognizing all of the many ways these funds are spent (Miles, Odden, Fermanich, & Archibald, 2005). Since Teacher Leadership can be a more powerful contributor to professional development than other professional development delivery methods, it could be cost-effective to reallocate some of the funds currently spent on other forms of professional development to support TL positions. The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (http://www.gtlcenter.org/learning-hub/innovation-station/teacher-led-professional-learning/funding-for-teacher-leadership) and Public Impact (http://teacherledprofessionallearning.org/steps/funding-for-teacher-leadership/) websites contain references and links to additional resources for thinking about sustainable funding for TL positions.

Grantees should also consider sustainability more broadly. The TIF resource, *Sustaining Your TIF Efforts: A Reflection Guide* (Pasley, Keleher, & Gould, 2016), discusses four key areas to consider for sustainability: increasing stakeholder support and communication, building capacity for quality programs, attaining ongoing financial support, and making the case for return on investment.

To make the case that TL positions provide a positive return on investment, a sound evaluation of the Teacher Leadership initiative (guided by a theory of action such as that shown in Figure 1 above) should be undertaken. Specific evaluation questions that could be asked about TL programs can be found in *Program Evaluation for Teacher Incentive Fund Project – Guide to Implementation* (Teacher Incentive Fund Technical

Assistance Network, 2016). While the causal impact of Teacher Leadership positions can be difficult to establish with certainty, it should at least be the case that teachers and TLs themselves perceive that the program has helped teachers improve practice and made remaining in teaching more attractive. A cost-effectiveness analysis can also help make the case for sustaining TL positions. See the TIF resource, *Approaches to TIF Program Evaluation: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* (Finster, 2016) for more information.

Last, steps should be taken to maintain a sharp focus on the TL positions and the program. The literature on Teacher Leadership (e.g., Werner & Campbell, 2016) suggests several factors that can lead to TL positions losing their focus, including lack of time, resistance for colleagues, and unsupportive administrators. Clear communication of TL roles to administrators, peers, and the TLs themselves is one fundamental way to help keep the focus on the intended tasks. TLs themselves may need preparation and support for dealing with reluctant colleagues and administrators. Principals may need to be prepared and held accountable for using TLs as intended. Preparing principals to work with TLs is discussed in the TIF brief, "Aligning the Human Capital Management System to Support STEM Master Teachers" (Milanowski, 2014). To check whether TLs' efforts are staying on course, program evaluations should include collecting information about teacher and TL perceptions of available time, colleague reactions, and administrator support using survey or interview questions. Grantees may also want to ask TLs to complete logs that document their activities. If these sources of information show that Teacher Leadership positions are veering way from their intended roles, program managers and stakeholder committees may want to revisit the design of the positions and/or the training and support provided to the TLs, their school administrators, and colleagues.

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Appendix 1.   Example Teacher Leader Job Description

The Teacher Development Peer Coach is a site-based TL position that involves working with site colleagues to help them develop the performance competencies underlying the district's teacher evaluation system, the Framework for Teaching. The Peer Coach will work to enhance teachers' understanding of the Framework, conduct announced observations of teaching practice, translate observations into performance rating scores and provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses, model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric level, develop and provide competency-focused, job embedded professional development to colleagues at the school, and support teacher one or more learning teams.

The Teacher Development Peer Coach work with school colleagues two instructional periods per day, while continuing to teach in her/his current area of assignment for the remaining instructional periods. Peer coaches will also participate in school leadership team meetings outside normal school hours two hours per week.

Reports to:

- Principal or assistant/associate principal

Duties and Responsibilities:

TLs will spend approximately 66% of their time teaching assigned classes or courses. The remaining 34% will be allocated approximately as follows:

3% Enhance teachers' knowledge of all of the evaluation system components and scoring rubrics.
- Answer teachers' questions about the meanings of rubric terms, how evidence is collected, and how ratings are made
- Encourage teachers in the school to use the rubrics to assess their own teaching

3% Conduct announced observations of teaching practice.
- Hold pre-conference with teacher to collect information about the class and lesson to be observed and collect relevant artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, student work samples)
- Observe teacher practice, record observations, and collect relevant artifacts

3% Translate observations into performance rating scores and provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses.
- Decide which rubric levels best describe the teacher's practice, using evidence collected at pre-conference & during observations,
- Complete rating form, summarizing the evidence used to make the rating decision; identify an area of strength and an area that could be improved
- Meet with teachers to share ratings and areas of strength and improvement, describe the evidence for the ratings made, and solicit teachers' reflection on the ratings and areas of strength and improvement

5% Model and coach on the competencies at the highest rubric level

- Suggest practices or materials teachers could try in order to address areas of improvement
- Demonstrate how to use materials or practices in the teacher's own classroom or by inviting teacher to observe in another classroom
- Observe teachers applying new practices or using new materials and provide feedback

5% Develop and provide competency-focused, job embedded professional development.

- Identify potential development methods, providers, and schedules for individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development
- Plan and conduct individual, grade-wide, subject-wide, or school-wide professional development sessions focused on areas of improvement

11% Support teacher learning teams.

- Assist teachers in analyzing ratings and evidence, identifying possible practice changes, sharing resources, and planning how and when to try new practices
- Facilitate teams by scheduling meetings, drafting agendas, locating resources, and recording team activities

5% Participate in school leadership team meetings

Knowledge, Experience and Training:

- Strong understanding of the Framework for Teaching and the district's teacher evaluation system.
- Ability to observe and record evidence of teaching practice.
- Ability to model, coach and provide feedback to individual teachers and teams of teachers to improve teaching practice.
- Experience in analyzing data and using results to identify areas of strength and weakness in instruction and student learning.
- Ability to work cooperatively with colleagues.
- Understanding of adult learning theory.
- Excellent organizational, communication and facilitation skills.

Qualifications:

- Minimum five (5) years of teaching experience
- Performance rated as effective or higher for three (3) prior years

Special Requirement:

- Flexibility to remain on-site beyond the normal school day 1-2 days per week, in order to attend school leadership team meetings, meet with teachers, and coordinate activities with other school leaders.