

2016-2017 Delaware Teacher Leader Pilot

Pilot Overview

The 2016-2017 Delaware Teacher Leader Pilot introduces five newly-designed teacher leader roles¹ into a group of schools across the state. The pilot is a step toward creating more career opportunities for Delaware educators while leveraging their talents to support students. The pilot will also serve as an opportunity for the state to learn from the experiences of pilot participants and partners and inform a potential full-scale implementation in the future. Pilot schools will play an integral role in offering feedback around successes, challenges and how teacher leadership can benefit educators and students. These roles were designed by the Educator Work Group, a group created by the Committee to Advance Educator Compensation & Careers (CAECC) to gain educator perspective on the design of teacher leadership positions in Delaware and inform the CAECC's policy recommendations to the Governor.

This spring, the DDOE invited all Delaware public schools to apply to join the pilot. Based on an application review by a group of Delaware educators and educational experts, the DDOE has invited 11 schools to join the pilot, representing multiple districts and counties, district and charter schools, and elementary, middle and high schools. The pilot will run for one year (May 2016 – June 2017), and schools selected to join will receive support throughout the spring, summer and the next school year to implement these new roles into their schools. The teacher leader pilot and teacher leader positions that will be created are contingent upon approval of funding in the FY17 budget.

The Pilot School Experience

The pilot experience involves dedicated time this spring and summer for schools and teacher leaders to plan. There will also be opportunities throughout the school year to reflect on how to make the roles as effective as possible.

- *Spring Application Process and Teacher Leader Selection:* The application process included questions that (1) encouraged schools to define their vision and preliminary plans for teacher leaders and (2) gave schools an opportunity to demonstrate the commitment of their educators and the LEA to participate fully in the pilot. One of the first important steps for selected pilot schools will be to engage their school's educators in the teacher leader selection process and select teacher leaders before summer support for pilot school administrators and teacher leaders begins.
- *Summer Implementation Planning:* Implementing teacher leader roles successfully involves many components such as strategic planning related to scheduling and responsibilities, setting specific goals for the role, and determining how to introduce roles to the school community. Teacher leaders also need training and support to successfully transition into these roles. Schools will participate in a cohort-wide planning session to think through implementation in more detail and work with a planning partner during the summer to develop an implementation plan. Teacher leaders will also participate in summer professional development opportunities.
- *School Year Implementation and Reflection:* As the teacher leader roles are put into practice, pilot school leaders and teacher leaders will participate in quarterly cohort meetings to promote

¹ See Appendix: The Five Teacher Leader Roles on page four for a brief description of each role.

collaboration among pilot schools, reflect on what they've learned and engage in professional learning. Additional opportunities for collaboration may be identified by these groups, and other key partners in this work—such as pilot school LEAs and local educator associations—will be engaged to offer ongoing feedback and support.

While the pilot will last one year, the goal is to expand the successful practices learned. In addition to thinking through what this means for all Delaware schools, the DDOE will develop a specific plan for supporting pilot schools and the teacher leaders in the roles after the pilot year.

Teacher Leader Responsibilities

Teacher leaders will play a critical role in ensuring the pilot generates and captures key lessons that will inform future implementation of teacher leader roles across Delaware. Their active participation means committing to the following:

- Fulfill the role-specific responsibilities outlined in each teacher leader role description
- Attend a summer cohort-wide planning session with a school leader to set goals, obtain resources and support, and develop a school-implementation plan
- Participate in quarterly cohort meetings to promote collaboration among pilot schools, reflect on implementation, and engage in professional learning.
- Offer feedback around successes, challenges, and how teacher leadership can benefit educators and students
- Set ambitious goals for performance in the leadership role and collect evidence of progress towards meeting them.

Pilot School Responsibilities

Pilot schools are partners in determining how to implement the teacher leader roles and are asked to find creative solutions to support their school goals within the parameters of the program. Specifically, participating schools commit to the following:

1. *Implement the model teacher leader roles.*
 - Introduce one or more of the 5 model roles developed by the CAECC's Educator Work Group, and follow the parameters of the roles, such as role responsibilities.
2. *Use the teacher leader selection process designed by the Educator Work Group.*
 - Open the teacher leader application to all eligible educators in the school.
 - Assemble the teacher leader selection committee by the specified dates, use the selection process developed, and select teacher leaders before summer training begins.
3. *Participate in support opportunities, and be an active member of the pilot cohort.*
 - School administrators must participate in a summer cohort-wide planning session and school-specific planning conversations.
 - School administrators and teacher leaders must participate in quarterly cohort meetings.
 - Participate in pilot evaluation and surveys.
4. *Actively engage and support their teacher leaders.*
 - Provide participating teacher leaders with the support and time necessary to allow the teacher leader to focus on their role while maintaining a "foot in the classroom."

- Ensure teacher leaders participate in all state- and district-led professional learning pertaining to the pilot.
 - Determine and deliver additional in-school professional learning and coaching for teacher leaders.
 - Engage teacher leaders in regular conversations about how the roles will be used, what types of support teacher leaders will deliver to the school and other educators and how school administration, staff and the teacher leader could work together to improve the effectiveness of the role.
5. *Engage and partner with the school community and partners to set up teacher leader roles for success.*
- Engage school community purposefully, making the case for the program and committing to address feedback and work through challenges in the pilot year.
 - Collaborate and communicate proactively with LEA and local educator association partners

Local Education Agency (LEAs) Responsibilities

LEAs play a critical role in the success of the pilot as well, and their leaders need to be committed to their pilot schools' success. Participating LEAs will need to:

- Express commitment to supporting the pilot school during the application process.
- Observe the pilot parameters communicated by the DDOE.
- Participate in summer and quarterly cohort meetings.
- Support schools during the teacher leader selection process by assessing eligibility of teachers and ensuring schools follow the model selection process.
- Where implementation depends on LEA systems, ensure smooth operations. This includes but is not limited to ensuring timely payment of teacher leader compensation and providing schools with the resources the DDOE has set aside for school support.
- Engage school boards to ensure their understanding of the pilot and offer them an opportunity to reflect on how to expand teacher leader roles in the coming years.
- Work with pilot schools to ensure key partners stay informed and engaged.

Local Educator Association² Responsibilities

Local educator associations play a critical role in communicating with Delaware educators and providing feedback to the DDOE. Specifically, these groups will be asked to:

- Ensure members are aware of the teacher leader opportunities during the application window.
- Help all Delaware educators understand the pilot's purpose and stay informed of its progress.
- Provide feedback regarding feedback offered by educators.
- Help schools identify educators to serve on school-based teacher leader selection committees.

² Local educator associations will be referred to as this full name, and "LEA" will be used to refer to local education agencies.

State Support

The state is invested in the success of the pilot schools & school communities, LEAs and their teacher leaders. The DDOE provide the following supports:

- A clear set of parameters—including but not limited to teacher leader role descriptions, a teacher leader selection process and release time recommendations—to help schools and LEAs plan for implementation
- Ongoing communication with key pilot partners including DSEA, pilot schools & LEAs, and teacher leaders. The DDOE will also equip these groups with tools to communicate with other partners, such as the broader school community and local educator agencies.
- A fair and transparent process for selecting pilot schools
- Financial resources to support teacher leader compensation and additional school expenses for implementing teacher leader roles
- Pilot planning support through one summer cohort planning session for all participating schools and additional school-based technical assistance
- Quarterly training and collaboration sessions for schools, teacher leaders and LEAs

Throughout the pilot year, the DDOE will also work to build a strong, collaborative network among pilot participants—schools, LEAs and teacher leaders—and coordinate communications among them.

The state is committed to ensuring these roles provide meaningful opportunities for teachers and impact educators and students. Throughout this process, the DDOE will evaluate progress toward pilot goals and the desired outcomes of the teacher leader roles. The DDOE will also engage the education community in an ongoing dialogue on what is working for Delaware and how it can be expanded in future years.

Contact

For additional questions about any aspect of the pilot, please contact Angeline Rivello at angeline.rivello@doe.k12.de.us or Brian Slocum at brian.slocum@tntp.org.

Appendix: The Five Teacher Leader Roles

The Teacher Leader Pilot provides participating schools the opportunity to introduce one or more of these five teacher leader roles newly-designed by the CAECC's Educator Work Group.

Instructional Practice Leads

Instructional Practice Leads will improve the instructional practice of fellow educators using a variety of high-impact support strategies focused on frequent, targeted feedback in educators' development areas. These include co-planning, co-teaching, modeling lessons and providing non-evaluative observations. Instructional Practice Leads will support educators from different content areas, adapting coaching as necessary to help them meet their development goals.

Digital Content Leads

Digital Content Leads will help educators they support build their instructional technology knowledge so more students have access to technology that helps improve their academic outcomes. In addition to researching and modeling best practices with their own students, Digital Content Leads will connect educators to technology resources and host professional learning sessions on how to integrate digital content and technology into instruction.

Instructional Strategy Leads

Instructional Strategy Leads will introduce new instructional strategies into schools to help educators meet their learning needs and to help schools meet their academic goals. These teacher leaders will collaborate with school leadership to identify areas of need and agree on research priorities. They will then research instructional strategy best practices in those areas and lead efforts to integrate the most promising strategies into classrooms.

Community Partnerships Leads

Community Partnership Leads will help students gain access to services designed to improve their physical and mental health, giving them a greater chance at academic success. They will design initiatives and build partnerships to provide these supports and train educators on effective student interventions to address challenges to student well-being and readiness to learn.

Instructional Culture Leads

Instructional Culture Leads will help schools build a philosophy around culture, discipline and culturally responsive teaching. They will also help educators implement strategies aimed to improve classroom culture. By fostering positive school culture and refining classroom management techniques, these teacher leaders will support school-wide efforts to increase student engagement, boost attendance rates and reduce student discipline incidents.

Appendix: Pilot Timeline³

Projected Date	Milestone
April 6, 2016	Pilot application available
April 22, 2016	School applications to join the pilot due to Angeline Rivello
May 4, 2016	Schools selected and notified
May 18, 2016	Application for teacher leaders available
May 25, 2016	Pilot schools select members for the selection committees
May 25, 2016	Teacher leader applications due to school-based selection committees
June 1 – June 15, 2016	Additional selection activities take place
June 17, 2016	Teacher leaders selected by the school-based selection committee
June – August 2016	School-level implementation planning and teacher leader training Cohort-based planning session and school-based technical assistance
August – September 2016	Teacher leader roles launched at schools Additional on-site technical assistance provided Pre-survey administered to pilot schools, LEAs, teacher leaders, and those receiving support from teacher leaders
October 2016 - January 2017	Quarterly cohort meetings and teacher leader professional learning Ongoing technical assistance, observation and monitoring
June 2017	Post-survey administered to pilot schools, LEAs, teacher leaders, and those receiving support from teacher leaders
January 2017 – June 2017	Pilot program evaluation finalized CAECC, EWG and TAG reconvene to discuss recommendations for scaling the teacher leader roles and create budget and legislative requests

³ Dates subject to change. Pilot program and the teacher leader positions that would be created are contingent upon funding approval in the FY17 budget.