

Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation



2017-2019

State of Iowa
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Introduction

Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system continues to focus on improvement. From the beginning, school districts have engaged in learning and exploration as they developed and later refined their local plans. TLC teams across the state have examined data to learn which elements of their plan were helping them reach their goals and to identify the components that needed adjustment. Today, districts continue to reflect on their progress toward the vision and goals of their TLC plans as they work toward making an even greater impact on teaching and learning.

Each school district is required to keep an updated TLC plan on file with the Iowa Department of Education (Department). Districts submit plan change requests to align their programs with what is needed for the greatest impact in their district. Over the past three years, 59 percent (575 requests) of the changes districts have made to their plans have focused on adjusting the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders. Revisiting teacher leadership roles shows an understanding of how the roles fit together to create a coherent instructional improvement plan that will strengthen instruction and improve student learning throughout the district.

TLC is the centerpiece of an education reform package proposed by the Branstad-Reynolds administration and adopted by legislators in 2013. The system rewards effective teachers with leadership opportunities, attracts promising teachers with competitive starting salaries and fosters greater collaboration for all teachers to learn from each other. The system was phased in over three years. The 2018-19 school year marked the third year involving all Iowa school districts. More than 25 percent of teachers in all 327 school districts are in leadership roles, such as instructional coaches and mentors. Iowa invests over \$163 million in the system annually.

TLC has become a key lever for school improvement in districts across the state. It is driven by a statewide vision that believes improving student learning requires improving the instruction they receive each day. There is no better way to do this than to empower our best teachers to lead the effort.

The goals of the TLC system are to:

- Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries as well as short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
- Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.
- Reward professional growth and effective teachers by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

“What I find most encouraging is the spirit of continuous learning and improvement reflected in local school districts’ approach to strengthening their teacher leadership plans over time.”

~ Dr. Ryan Wise, Director, Iowa Department of Education

This report presents data and statewide highlights from the [District End of Year Reports](#) over the past three years as well as statewide data and district spotlights. The Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation (CELC) identified strengths and successes as well as steps to continue the work from their perspective based on review and reflection of multiple sources of data. This three-year legislative review includes information on teacher retention, teacher leadership positions, teacher compensation, induction mentoring, student achievement and commission recommendations.

TLC System Goals and Progress

Attract and Retain

Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and offering short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.

Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.

Promote Collaboration

Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.

Reward Professional Growth

Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.

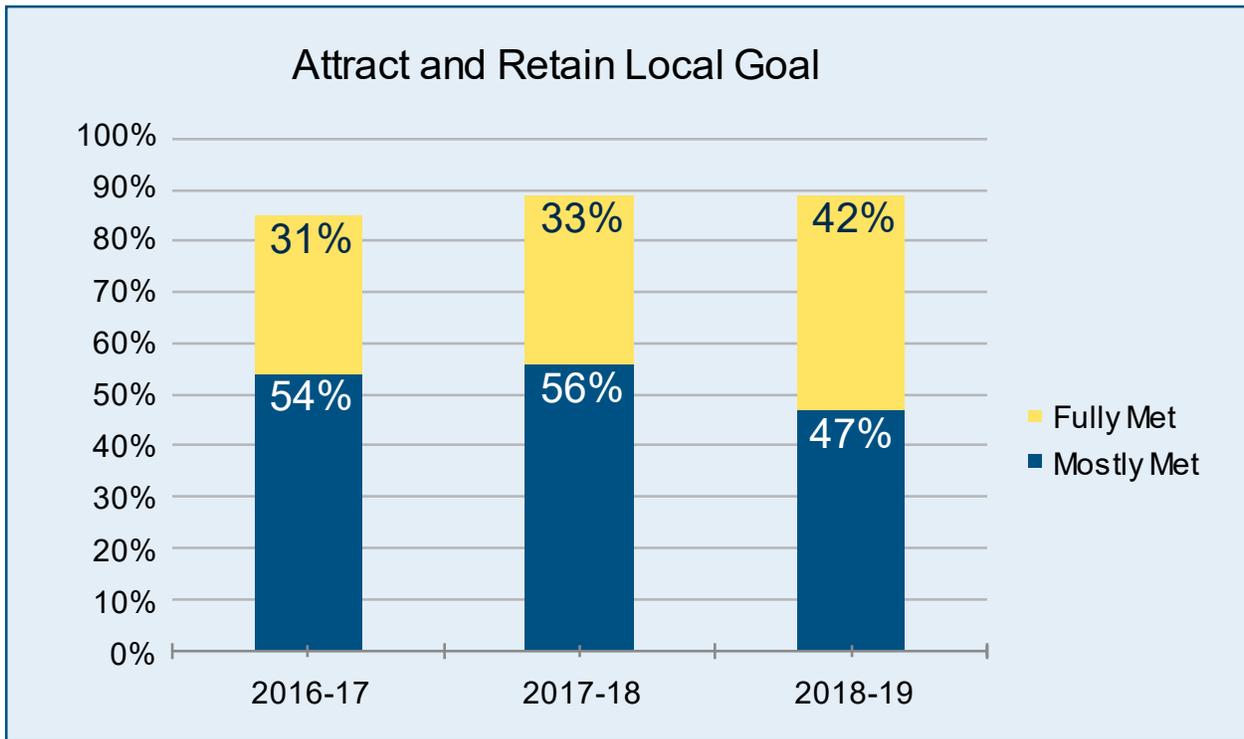
Improve Student Achievement

Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

Attract and Retain

Summary

Increased base salaries in many districts and new opportunities for teachers to demonstrate leadership are helping districts to attract and retain teachers. Improved mentoring programs provide support to new and career teachers.



In 2016-17 through 2018-19, the data showed that an increase of 4 percent of districts fully or mostly met their local attract and retain goal. In 2018-19, 9 percent more districts reported fully meeting this goal.

State Report Highlights



A majority of districts reported increased rates of teacher retention that they attributed to the work of teacher leaders.



As districts continued to refine their support of new teachers, mentor and induction coaches have improved the entry skill of new-to-the-profession teachers.



Teacher leaders support new and veteran teachers in improving instruction, leading to increased job satisfaction.



Many districts reported that the teacher leadership program created a school culture where people want to work.

Supporting Data

Legislation requires each district make a good faith effort to place 25 percent of teachers in leadership roles.

- 200 districts had 25 percent or more
- 85 districts had 18 percent to 24.99 percent
- 28 districts had 10 percent to 17.99 percent
- 17 districts had less than 10 percent
- The state of Iowa had 28 percent of teachers identified as teacher leaders

District Spotlight - Independence

This picture is from our TLC workshop day at the beginning of the school year. All of the mentor teachers were discussing their role as a mentor teacher and how they can best support new teachers to the district as well as the profession.



The Independence plan to support new teachers includes:

Instructional Coaches:

- Providing instructional support to teachers through co-teaching and co-planning.
- Coaching includes learning labs, curriculum support, classroom management and differentiation.

Curriculum Leaders:

- Leading professional learning communities/Leading Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) pilot teams.
- Supporting vertical alignment of essential learnings/prioritized standards.
- Supporting instructional frameworks.

Mentor Teachers:

- Supporting and encouraging new-to-the-profession and new-to-the-district teachers.

District Spotlight - Twin Rivers / Humboldt



Pictured: Monthly Mentor Meeting:
From left to right:
New Teachers
Derrick Elman and
Sarah McCullough,
Mentor Lisa Long

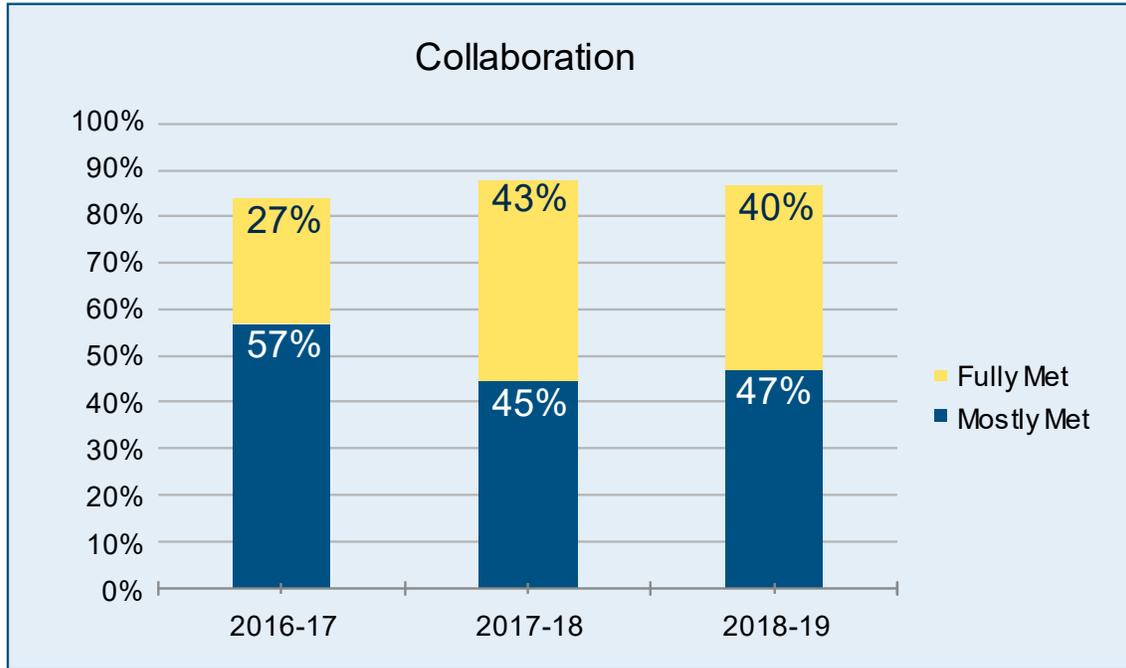
With the annual goal of attracting and retaining teachers, the Humboldt and Twin Rivers TLC Consortium provides extensive support for classroom management and instructional practices for all teachers new to their districts as well as support for veteran teachers. The following are a few examples of those supports:

- Before school starts, the districts compensate new teachers for a day of collaboration. The mentor coordinator reviews technology needs, basic district information, contractual information, expectations in the consortium, and a timeline of events for the year. The other half of the day, new teachers/mentors meet to get acquainted and prepare for the start of the school year.
- All teachers new to the district and their TLC mentors participate in monthly meetings with our district TLC mentor coordinator. Discussions around Iowa Teaching Standards & Benchmarks, upcoming consortium needs and goals for the upcoming month.
- All teachers new to the district participate in a Student Centered Coaching Cycle (SCC) with one of our instructional coaches.
- All new and veteran teachers in the consortium are supported through the TLC program with TLC leadership at monthly curriculum meetings, support for technology integration, data supports, and opportunities to participate in SCC cycles with our TLC instructional coaches.
- The TLC committee gathers feedback from leaders and all teachers for their annual review of the TLC plan and uses this data to make decisions about the plan for the following year and refine ways to support all teachers.

Promote Collaboration

Summary

As a result of TLC, districts have made collaboration a common practice through initiatives such as peer observations, learning labs, coaching cycles, co-planning and co-teaching, and professional learning communities (PLCs). These types of activities are identified in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM).



From 2016-17 through 2018-19, the data showed that an increase of 13 percent of districts fully met their local collaboration goal.

State Report Highlights



Many districts reported that teacher leaders served as a leader of PLCs in their buildings.



Teacher leaders facilitated visits across classrooms, which promoted ongoing collaboration among all teachers in buildings and across districts.



Districts reported that teacher leaders coached teachers through full coaching cycles and reflective practices. This type of ongoing cycle of goal-setting, learning, observation, data and reflection helped increase achievement and engagement of students by drawing out the best of every teacher.



The End of Year Reports showed an increase of teacher leaders collaborating with school and district leaders in decision-making process.

Supporting Data:

Over the past three years, plan change request data have been collected by each part of the district TLC Plan. Fifty-nine percent of plan change requests have come in the area of teacher leadership roles. These requests have demonstrated districts' desire to leverage TLC resources to increase meaningful collaboration in order to impact teaching and learning.

Part	Number of Requests	Percent of Requests
Part 1 Overview	14	1%
Part 2 Vision and Goals	24	3%
Part 3 School Improvement	27	3%
Part 4 Improved New Teacher Entry	63	6%
Part 5 Teacher Leadership Roles	575	59%
Part 6 Teacher Leader Selection	62	6%
Part 7 Professional Development	16	2%
Part 8 Goal Success Measurement	110	11%
Part 9 Capacity	9	9%
Part 10 Budget Alignment	81	8%
Total	981	

District Spotlight – Bedford

Iowa Core work during weekly TLC cluster meetings at Bedford Elementary. Pictured: Kellie Derry, Joyce Sleep, Rene' Rogers, Debbie Powell, Abby Kreps and Kathy Johnson



Bedford Community School District shared the power of collaboration as a result of the implementation of their TLC plan.

- Weekly job-embedded collaboration focusing on standards that promote best practices in instruction.
- Cluster time (professional learning community) centered around the National Institute for Excellence Instructional Framework and connecting those rubric indicators to specific content areas.
- Weekly collaboration allows our teachers to learn from one another, brainstorm and critique lessons and improve instructional strategies, and improve their overall instructional performance to ultimately enhance student learning.

District Spotlight – Linn Mar

Pictured: Holly Fencil, a PE teacher at Novak Elementary. This is her first year as a High Impact Strategies and Initiatives Model Teacher. The photos are of a kindergarten class.



In 2018-19, 548 teachers at Linn-Mar Community School District engaged in 644 observations of the model teachers in our teacher leadership program. We believe observing and interacting with peers is a necessary part of professional growth and a valuable tool in the development of innovative instructional practices. Linn-Mar employs 36 model teachers working in classrooms PK - 12th grades in a variety of subjects. They are selected annually based on six competency areas which were collaboratively designed by our district's coaches, administrators and directors. Our model teachers display high efficacy and craftsmanship in these areas: classroom climate, student-centered classroom management, innovative classroom practices, enrichment and remediation, differentiated teaching and learning and high impact strategies and initiatives.

Upon conclusion of a visit to a model teacher's classroom, teachers complete a feedback survey. For two years they have consistently ranked their visits on average of 4.5 out of 5 as an effective use of their time. Given the demands of educators today, we feel this data speaks volumes regarding the use of model teachers in our program. For more information and to view our current lineup of model teachers, please visit this website: tinyurl.com/LMmodelteachers

Reward Professional Growth

Summary

TLC offered new pathways for exceptional teachers to share their best practices with colleagues without necessarily having to leave their own classrooms. Teachers at all levels – both teacher leaders and those who benefit from the teacher leaders’ shared expertise – are benefiting from the new roles.



From 2016-2017 through 2018-2019, the data showed that an increased 3 percent of districts fully met their local goal of rewarding professional growth.

State Report Highlights



Many districts reported that teacher leaders support the professional growth of teachers across the district.



TLC roles across the state were filled with qualified teacher leaders. Many of those leaders returned to their TLC positions.



A majority of districts reported providing teacher leaders with professional development tailored to their roles and aspirations. Teacher leaders also continue to build their skills by being involved in key district and state initiatives.



Teacher leadership roles and responsibilities have been redefined by districts in order to maximize TLC to impact student achievement goals. These leadership roles included: curriculum and professional development, at-risk, social and emotional, equity, special education, english learners, and gifted and talented.



Of the \$160 million allocated in FY18, districts spent more than \$151 million to compensate teacher leaders for their increased responsibilities and additional contract days.

Supporting Data

An instructional framework is a powerful professional development support tool that provides a common language for improving instruction to develop and grow effective teaching practices. In a recent survey of districts (194 responses), 81 percent stated that they have adopted an instructional framework.

District Spotlight - Waukee

Pictured: Cornelius Minor leads a classroom of students at Waukee Middle School while TLC leaders and teachers observe.



TLC leaders implement learning in Waukee in a variety of ways. Leaders often engage teachers in learning by bringing in professional educators in which they have learned from in other capacities (book study, conferences, etc). Last year, secondary teachers were able to utilize a two-day learning experience with Cornelius Minor (a Brooklyn-based educator who works with teachers, school leaders, and leaders of community-based organizations to support equitable literacy reform). Teachers and TLC leaders observed Minor teaching with multiple middle school and high school classes with students in a fishbowl approach. TLC funding was able to provide classroom teachers with substitutes so they could engage in pre-lesson and post-lesson dialogue about instructional design, game-time decisions in the classroom, and what was next for support students in each of the classrooms in which they observed his teaching.

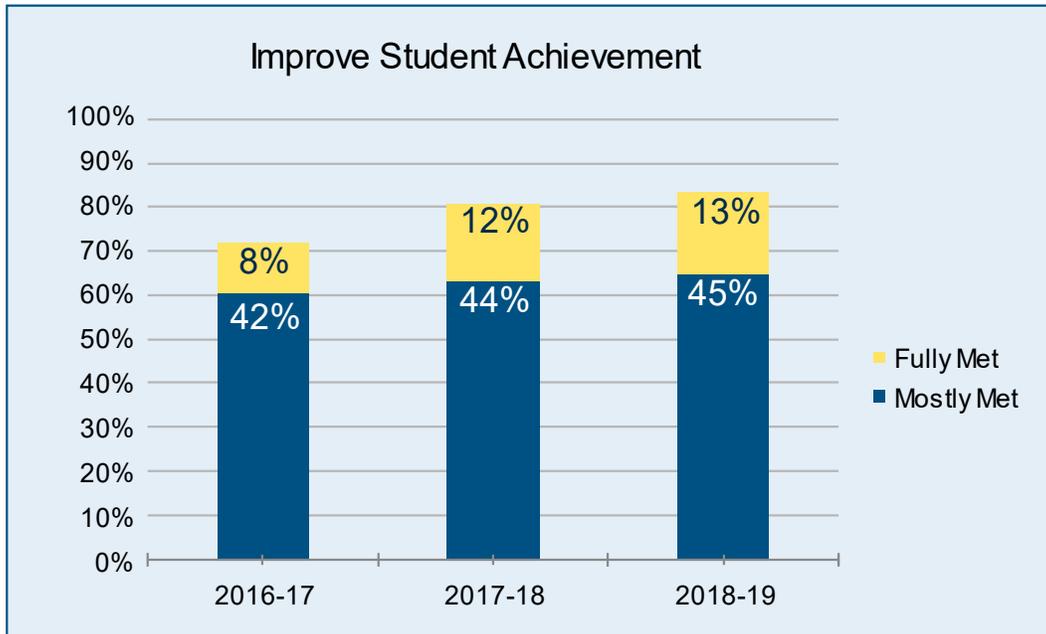
In addition to TLC leaders being able to access learning to bring back to the district from conferences and professional educators, they co-design and present professional learning with teachers within the district. We have a structure for PLC+ where teachers take half or full days to learn alongside their instructional coach. Instructional mentors support first year and New-to-Waukee teachers with a variety of modeled lessons and learning opportunities including a "Warrior Walk" in pre-service days. Curriculum leaders support ongoing learning with early out professional development days and help with teacher quality learning. TLC leaders, including instructional coaches, curriculum leaders, english learner mentors, instructional strategists and classroom teachers, design and lead EdSessions once or twice per year where teachers can choose which sessions they are most interested in attending.

The ongoing learning and opportunities for growth in Waukee is supported with TLC funds. TLC allows us to utilize the best professional resources and bring best practices to our staff and students in such incredible ways. Our work around our TLC goals continues to be at the forefront of our dedication, purpose and efforts in engaging in professional learning each year. We have a team and staff of teachers that see the value of such learning and application of new ideas, strategies and approaches in our classrooms and schools.

Improve Student Achievement

Summary

Districts have reported increases in student achievement, graduation rates, and college entrance rates, among other indicators. Most districts reported TLC as one of several factors contributing to student achievement gains. They were confident there would be a greater tie between the program and student achievement as districts continue to refine the implementation of the TLC system.



From 2016-17 through 2018-19, the data showed that an increase of 8 percent of districts mostly or fully met their student achievement goal.

State Report Highlights



Districts reported a greater connection between teacher leadership and student achievement. They used multiple measures of student achievement to monitor the impact. In addition to Iowa Assessment data, districts also used measurements such as FAST reading assessments, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Basic Reading Inventory (BRI), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) data, engagement data and common formative assessments.



Coaching delivered by teacher leaders assisted teachers in equipping students with key skills for academic and workplace success.



Teacher leaders supported classroom teachers in analyzing student data to inform instructional planning.



Teacher leaders enhanced student achievement through the work of social-emotional, at-risk and mental health supports.

Supporting Data

In FY19, each district received \$326.50 per student in TLC funding. The chart below shows the range of TLC fund balances (i.e., the percentage of TLC funds that a district did not spend and instead carried forward into the next fiscal year) across Iowa.

% Fund Balance to Allocation Total	Number of School Districts
Less than 15%	245
15% - 30%	63
31% - 50%	18
More than 50%	4

TLC Allowable Use of Funds Document

District Spotlight - Howard-Winneshiek

Teachers process student work using a protocol created during PLC work with a teacher leader.



Howard-Winneshiek's goal is to improve student achievement by strengthening the instruction that is happening in our classrooms.

Howard-Winneshiek has designed the teacher leadership model around two main components; instructional coaches and collaborative teachers. **Our "Why"**: We believe teachers are passionate lifelong learners who care about each other and student learning. Therefore, teacher leaders strive to build trusting relationships in order to empower others to grow professionally.

Instructional coaches (ICs) have been deeply involved in the PLC work across the district, helping to create a solid focus around quality instruction and response to data. From this PLC work, ICs have been able to carry the job-embedded professional development focus into the classroom with many teachers. Additionally, collaborative teachers have had an active role in implementing quality instructional practices that are research based and supported by the district.

Professional development activities continue to indicate a need to improve the alignment of district curriculum to Iowa Core. Instructional coaches intentionally focused their work during grade-level PLCs on analyzing and refining instructional activities. PLC's in the elementary setting collect authentic data and review it to implement strategies that impact student learning regularly. Teachers have noted greater satisfaction with instructional resources provided by ICs, and administrators have recognized greatly improved lesson planning and unit organization aligned to specific student achievement needs.

At the secondary level, every department continued to be connected with an instructional coach as a support and resource guide for professional development in standards-based grading. Instructional coaches were an integral part of the work our science department did to restructure course offerings to align with the Next Generation Science Standards. Similar work has been completed in the math department and is ongoing across the school.

District Spotlight - Pleasant Valley



Pictured:
Mark Jones
and Traci
Keppy
and three
students

The Teacher Leadership System (TLS) has afforded Pleasant Valley (PV) Community School District a framework to address student learning in ways beyond what was previously possible. PV is improving student achievement by enhancing the practice of teaching for all teachers. At the foundation of this work is the partnership between instructional coaches and classroom teachers.

- Over 98 percent of Pleasant Valley teachers agree that their instructional practices and student learning have improved through their partnership with their instructional coach.
- In 2015, 78 percent of teachers agreed that instructional coaching helped improve instructional practices. This number has steadily increased over the years to 98% in 2018.
- In 2015, 74 percent of teachers agreed that instructional coaching helped support student learning goals in the classroom. This number has steadily increased over the years to 99% in 2018.

Professional Learning Communities at PV have also maintained a focus on using data to guide instructional decisions.

- In 2018, over 89 percent of Pleasant Valley teachers agreed that they adjusted the instructional practices in the classroom based on analysis of student data.

Through the TLS, teacher leaders are improving instructional practices and supporting student learning goals.

Strengths and Successes

The CELC meets at least three times a year, as they focus on TLC implementation statewide. The following strengths and successes are from the perspective of the CELC based on their review and reflection on multiple sources of data.

At the State Level

- School districts continue to submit plan changes that reflect ways to better leverage TLC resources. This is demonstrated in the innovative uses of teacher leader roles and responsibilities to meet school improvement efforts.
- An increasing number of school districts across the state have identified and implemented an instructional framework. The state has led the way in this effort, as the Department has supported 80 school districts in the adoption of the Iowa Instructional Framework.
- The Department sponsored a summer event “A Systemic Approach to Elevating Teacher Leadership.” This event provided over 800 Iowa educators with tools to take a deeper look at their TLC programs and ways to improve their strategies.

At the District Level

- Districts are using their TLC allocations in purposeful ways to meet local needs as defined by their goals.
- Collaboration continues to be the mainstay for districts as they seek to improve culture, climate and instructional practices.
- Districts continue to support the professional development of their teacher leaders in order to enable them to share their learnings, expertise and tools with all teachers in the district.

At the Teacher Level

- Classroom teachers, who work with instructional coaches, report being empowered to refine their teaching practices through reflection and reinforcement.
- Teachers report that professional development, guided by teacher leaders, has become more relevant and supportive of their individual needs. This can be seen through work with specific curriculum areas and student learning needs.
- New-to-the-profession teachers share that a relationship with their teacher leader/mentor helps develop their full potential as a resilient teacher. Induction-mentoring provides support and guidance and advice to teachers to enable them to enhance their teaching skills and to develop professionally.

Continuing the Work

The purpose of the CELC is to monitor the implementation fidelity of the TLC systems by school districts. The commission shall also monitor the expenditures of monies for the TLC purpose. The following are actions identified by the CELC to assist in the continued implementation of TLC across the state of Iowa.

- Promote TLC programs as an innovation in the school reform process.
- Encourage districts to evaluate the fidelity of the implementation of their TLC plan. Questions for thought: To what level are districts doing what they set out to do? What has been the impact of those efforts on student achievement?
- Align TLC practices with the IPDM in order to support a continuous professional learning mindset among teachers to improve teaching and learning.
- Explore ways to support districts in their program goals and measurements in order to provide high-quality reporting and data-based decision making.
- Encourage and facilitate the sharing of TLC best practices across districts.
- Continue to promote the importance of an instructional framework to identify common language and understanding of best practices, district-wide.
- Identify additional student data that would help with TLC program evaluation through different lenses.
- Determine the make-up of teacher leaders across the state in such areas as job-specific roles and responsibilities, years in education and demographics.
- Examine teacher leader hiring practices, selection, evaluation and years in service.
- Provide support to principals and teacher leaders that will continue to increase collaboration, help them better understand each other's roles, and use the trust that has been built to move to the next level of work, a focus on teaching and learning.
- Support new administrators (principals, superintendents, and district office) who are not familiar with the TLC system.
- Provide funding and support to AEAs so they may contribute by providing training and best practices to districts.
- Offer continued professional development guided by the TLC system – Framework for Learning Supports (adult learning, collaborative culture, communication, content/pedagogy/assessment, system thinking, data, organizational leadership).
- The state should continue to fund the TLC process, in order to improve student learning through the instruction they receive each day. Empower the state's best teachers to lead the effort through TLC.

Commission Members

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