HOW TEACHER LEADERSHIP WILL ADVANCE YOUR GOALS

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Our Mission and Vision

Our Mission
Building educator excellence to give all students the opportunity for success

Our Vision
Our vision is that every student in America is taught by an excellent teacher and supported by effective leaders every year. We believe intentional, sustained, and high-quality investments in educators directly result in success for all students and are essential to eliminating equity gaps. As a result, NIET is committed to raising achievement levels for all students by focusing on the most powerful lever for change – teachers and the leadership that supports them.
We believe the quality of a district or a school cannot exceed the quality of its educators.

- **501(c)3, not-for-profit organization** focused on improving educator effectiveness in schools particularly high-need schools
- **Recognized** leader in educator effectiveness reform, support, training and research focused on improving educational outcomes for all students
- Provider of **intensive site-based coaching** and support for high-need schools
- **275,000 educators and 2.75 million students** impacted by NIET’s work
- Innovative power of NIET is evidenced through the development of over **30,000 teacher leaders**
- Significantly **expanding the pipeline** of effective educators
What does research show are effective strategies to improve classroom instruction?

- A Brown University study found that teachers working in schools with more supportive professional environments improved their instructional effectiveness by 39% more than teachers in less supportive environments. (Kraft, 2016)

- What do highly supportive environments include?
  - Opportunities for teachers to collaborate on improving instruction
  - Job-embedded professional learning and coaching
  - An objective and accurate approach to evaluation/observation that offers meaningful feedback for improvement

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Can principals deliver a highly supportive environment for teachers by themselves?

- Principals spend, on average, **only 8-17% of their working hours on instructional leadership.** (Supovitz, 2011)

- Principals in another study spent **less than 1% of their time on the activity with the strongest link to improvements** in teaching and learning – instructional coaching. (Loeb, 2013)

- A 2017 survey of state teachers of the year found “the challenges of time, resources, and overall capacity of evaluators limited teachers’ opportunity to receive information about their performance that can help them improve.” (Goe, Wylie, Bosso & Olson, 2017)
Teacher leadership roles create a highly supportive environment and advance school success

- Formal teacher leadership roles, embedded in the school’s system for professional learning and support, increase the overall instructional leadership capacity of the school.

- New standards, assessments, and curriculum require today’s teachers to change their instructional practices in significant ways – teacher leaders expand the school’s capacity to help them do that.

- Additionally, teacher leadership roles can be a powerful strategy for teacher retention and professional growth.
  - Research shows demand among today’s teachers for opportunities to step into hybrid or middle leader roles that focus on improving instruction and do not require becoming an administrator.
In formal, school-based teacher leader roles, teacher leaders take on **instructional leadership responsibilities** in their school while maintaining their role as a classroom instructor.

These responsibilities often include **facilitating professional learning** activities for their peer teachers, such as leading professional learning communities or providing coaching and feedback.

While whole-school approaches to teacher leadership have the greatest impact on student achievement and educator effectiveness, teacher leader roles could also be used for more **targeted purposes** such as mentoring new teachers.
## Overarching recommendations for:

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<th>State Policymakers</th>
<th>District Policymakers</th>
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<td>• Use ESSA Title I and II-A set-asides to support formal teacher leadership roles</td>
<td>• Articulate a vision for teacher leadership and build stakeholder support</td>
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<td>• Create sustainable, dedicated funding streams to support teacher leadership</td>
<td>• Invest in schoolwide systems of improvement by using funding flexibility</td>
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<td>• Ensure maximum flexibility on use of funds for schoolwide improvement activities</td>
<td>• Shift resources toward evidence-based practices</td>
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<td>• Create a strategy for moving to job-embedded and school-based professional learning</td>
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Examples of State-Supported Options
Option 1: Take a large-scale approach

- Provide **funding for every school** in the state to adopt and support teacher leader roles.

- Examples:
  - **Iowa’s Teacher and Leader Compensation (TLC) System** provides $163 million in annual funding for teacher leader roles in every school in the state. This investment was followed up with adoption of the Iowa Instructional Framework for use by teacher and school leaders.
  - **Louisiana’s Believe and Prepare program** provides annual training for qualified mentor teachers across the state to support teacher candidates and new teachers, with a goal of 2,500 trained mentors statewide by 2020.
  - **Tennessee** and **Mississippi** have also funded teacher leader and coaching positions at the school level that focus on literacy.
Option 2: Run a competitive grant program

- Provide **targeted funding** via application process for select schools/districts to implement teacher leader roles and professional learning structures.

- Examples:
  - **Indiana’s Career Ladder program** authorizes $5 million in funding over two years for districts to implement career ladder programs. The Department of Education anticipates awarding the $3.5 million in funds appropriated by the legislature to fund up to 30 grants in February 2020 (districts can receive grants of $150k or more).
  - **Colorado’s Retaining Teachers Grant Program** provides $2.87 million in funding over two years for districts to implement retention strategies, including implementation of career advancement pathways for master teacher and teacher leadership positions for effective teachers (districts can receive up to $125k per year).
Option 3: Leverage existing programs

- **Title I School Improvement:** Use portion of required ESSA Title I 7% set-aside for school improvement to fund teacher leader programs as a school improvement strategy.
  - Example: **Texas** created a $4 million “Teacher Leadership Grant Program” to give up to 8 awards for schools identified for comprehensive school improvement programs to implement teacher leader programs.

- **Title II-A Set Asides:** Use optional Title II-A 5% set-aside for educator development and/or additional 3% set aside for investments in school leaders, which can include teacher leaders.
  - Example: **Minnesota** uses Title II-A set asides to improve the design and implementation of career advancement or teacher leadership opportunities that include instructional coaching, mentoring, and program leadership.
Option 3: Leverage existing programs

- **Ensure Funding Flexibility:** Encourage schools to take advantage of federal funding flexibility by reducing state-imposed barriers on permissible uses of title funds.
  - Example: **Indiana** allows all Title I schools to adopt a Title I schoolwide spending approach, which allows each school to use their funding flexibility to implement whole-school improvement strategies.

- **ESSA Title II-A Plan Approval:** Create statewide standards and goals to guide districts’ plans for spending Title II-A in a way that supports teacher leader roles.
  - Example: **Washington** has well-defined statewide goals and uses a district application process for Title II-A to ensure money is spent on coordinated statewide strategies.
Digging Deeper: Q&A with Superintendent Dr. Betsy Hargrove
Q&A with
Dr. Betsy Hargrove
Superintendent
Avondale Elementary
School District #44

- Why did Avondale decide to focus on teacher leadership?
- How did you find and carve out resources to support teacher leadership?
- What is the impact of the structured system you have in Avondale for the district, for your teachers?
- What is the impact for students?
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