

TEACHER LEADERSHIP FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

UNCOVER NEW LEADERSHIP IDEAS & SEED INNOVATION

Continue to shine a spotlight on the promise of teacher leadership and spur more research into innovative approaches to identifying, developing, and supporting teacher leaders.

- Convene experts and practitioners to discuss different teacher leadership models, share best practices, develop solutions to leadership challenges, and collaborate on innovative approaches (e.g., through additional **Teach to Lead convenings**).
- Invest in a teacher leadership research agenda (e.g., through grants and competitions administered by the **Institute for Education Sciences (IES)**) and require pilot programs to include an evaluation. For example, amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or other statutes to create or extend competitions to support the development of high-quality, open-source tools for assessing teacher leader practice (e.g., 360° survey instruments, observational tools, and online assessment instruments) and outcome measures (e.g., valid and consistent student growth measures).
- Increase funding for the **Investing in Innovation Fund (i3)** to \$300 million, which could support projects that build teachers' leadership skills as a pathway to the principalship or that strengthen aspiring or current principals' ability to cultivate teacher leaders and instructional leadership teams.

REMOVE BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Encourage states and districts to remove statutory or regulatory hurdles that prevent teachers from being able to perform leadership duties or that prevent principals from being able to create school conditions that support teacher leadership.

- Initiate a rulemaking process to set the eligibility criteria for relevant grant competitions such that eligible entities must **remove barriers to the development of teacher leaders**. These barriers could include state or local laws or collectively bargained agreements that restrict certain leadership responsibilities teachers can take on without receiving additional levels of licensure.
- Initiate a rulemaking process to provide priority and preference points in competitive grant competitions to entities that **provide principals with staffing authority** (e.g., states or districts that break down existing central office barriers to provide principals with the authority to effectively hire, promote, and dismiss staff).
- Provide priority for grantees in various state- or district-level competitions that thoughtfully remove barriers or otherwise **provide principals with balanced autonomy** in order to be eligible (e.g., providing principals with appropriate authority over the school budget and schedule). Retain such requirements where they already exist (e.g., the **Turnaround School Leaders program** funded through the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program).

ABOUT NEW LEADERS

Founded in 2000 by a team of social entrepreneurs, New Leaders is a national nonprofit that develops transformational school leaders and designs effective leadership policies and practices for school systems across the country. Research shows—and our experience confirms—that strong school leaders have a powerful multiplier effect, dramatically improving the quality of teaching and raising student achievement in a school. New Leaders now operates in eight regions of the United States. We have developed more than 1,600 teacher leaders and school leaders who are supporting 14,000 teachers and 350,000 students.

LEADING FROM EVERY SEAT

For more information, please see our white paper entitled [*Leading from Every Seat: Empowering Principals to Cultivate Teacher Leadership for School Improvement*](#). Consisting of five topical briefs, the publication's local, state, and federal policy recommendations related to teacher leadership are informed by the latest research, lessons from implementation of our program continuum, and our work with school districts, states, and leadership programs across the country.

CONTACT

Jackie Gran, Margaret Young, and Alexandra Broin at policyteam@newleaders.org.

INVEST IN LEADERSHIP TO IMPROVE TEACHING & LEARNING

Target existing funds toward effective leadership investments by ensuring states and districts understand allowable uses of funds and allocating or setting aside funds specifically for leadership.

- Issue new ESEA Title II-A guidance making clear that funds can be used to for leadership activities, including for teacher leadership development and training for principals and their instructional leadership teams.
- Provide technical assistance to states on how they can use the current statutory authority to encourage district use of ESEA Title II-A funds on activities, including teacher leader training, that have been shown through scientifically based research to improve student achievement.
- Use the new supplemental priorities and definitions to target discretionary funds to projects focused on teacher leadership as a career pathway for teachers (Priority 9 – Improving Teacher Effectiveness and Promoting Equitable Access to Effective Teachers) and as a pipeline to the principalship (Priority 10 – Improving the Effectiveness of Principals).
- Increase funding for the School Leadership Program (SLP) to \$38.3 million to support school leader effectiveness.¹
- Update the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) and increase funding to \$350 million. Add “leader” to the program name (the Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund (TLIF)) and ensure that applicants address teachers, teacher leaders, and principals.
- Fund the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant program at \$117.5 million, which could support projects focused on strengthening current or aspiring principals’ skills in managing talent and building strong school cultures to grow teacher leaders and create strong instructional leadership teams.

ENCOURAGE COHERENT HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Encourage states and districts to ensure there is strong alignment within their human capital management systems (HCMSs) to support teacher leader effectiveness.

- Amend ESEA to specifically allow states and districts receiving Title II-A funding to use funds for the development and implementation of an evaluation and support system that is used to inform personnel decisions (i.e., is used to, among other things, identify teachers ready to lead).
- Amend, through authorizing statute or through appropriations language, Title II-A of ESEA to set aside a portion of funds for national activities to support states and districts with cutting-edge, evidence-based plans for more coherent approaches to the evaluation and support of teachers and leaders. For example, encourage evaluation and support system parameters that focus teachers, teacher leaders, and principals on pushing for the same outcomes (e.g., student learning objective (SLOs) for the multiple classrooms a teacher leader supports that are aligned to the school’s annual goals).

INVEST IN EQUITY

Focus additional federal resources on the schools and communities most in need of strong, consistent teaching and leading.

- Use the new supplemental priorities and definitions (Priority 4 – Serving High-Need Students) to target discretionary funds to teacher leadership development projects focused on serving high-need students, schools, and communities.
- Continue using the SIG program set-aside to support the Turnaround School Leaders program to enhance leadership in persistently low-performing schools.

¹ Note: We are also supportive of the Administration’s proposal to replace and build on SLP through the Teacher and Principal Pathways as long as the dedicated funding stream for principal effectiveness includes support for both aspiring principals as well as and current principals and their instructional leadership teams.