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# NCTQ Databurst Teacher Leadership Opportunities

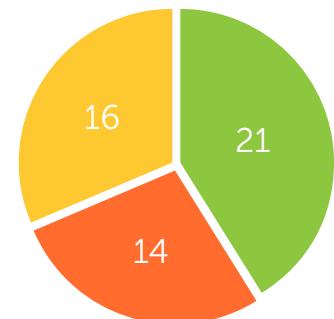
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Within the traditional public school model, there have not been that many opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles without leaving the classroom.<sup>1</sup> Surveys show that teachers want greater autonomy and more leadership opportunities.<sup>2</sup> Recognizing this problem, states have taken various steps to adopt policies designed to identify, support, and incentivize teacher leadership positions. Formal adoption of such policies in recent years has been swift, with eight additional states adopting them in just the past two years. Currently, there are 35 states which have some formal policy designating teacher leaders without taking these educators out of the classroom.

As this analysis demonstrates, the efforts in some states are likely to have more of an impact than others. Developing these policies at the state level is somewhat of a tricky business in that the real work and buy-in has to occur at the district and school level. Still, states can do a lot to support districts in developing strong policies to increase teacher and principal buy-in.

Alongside ensuring the most effective teachers are eligible for teacher leadership roles, one important component at the state level is to build both monetary and non-monetary incentives and supports into teacher leadership policies. Incentives (such as additional compensation) and supports (such as reduced course loads) can help ensure that teacher leadership roles are both attractive and sustainable.

## State Teacher Leadership Policies



- State has a formal teacher leadership policy that includes supports and/or monetary incentives
- State has a formal teacher leadership policy that does not include supports and/or monetary incentives
- State has no formal teacher leadership policy

## Promising State Policy

**Utah's** teacher leader designation provides a variety of meaningful leadership positions through which teachers can take on added responsibility. Teachers must be rated effective or higher under an evaluation system that includes objective measures of student growth. Utah does not require specific incentives, but its policy includes explicit language that encourages districts to provide both monetary and non-monetary supports. Overall, Utah's teacher leadership policy establishes a strong floor for what districts must offer their effective teachers in terms of preparation and advancement opportunities.

## Teacher Leadership in Practice

New York City's school district, the **New York City Department of Education** (NYCDOE), serves as a great example of how a district can run with a state's teacher leadership policy. New York state established the expectation that districts develop a career ladder with carefully selected teacher leaders who should receive "additional compensation, recognition, and job-embedded professional development," but does not otherwise outline specific requirements. The district responded by developing a career ladder with Model Teacher, Peer Collaborative Teacher, and Master Teacher roles, all of which come with financial incentives of up to \$20,000. To be eligible, teachers must have earned a rating of effective or higher, pass criteria established by the NYCDOE and the teachers union, and be chosen by their principal.

1 Behrstock, E., & Clifford, M. (2009). Leading Gen Y teachers: Emerging strategies for school leaders (TQ Research & Policy Brief). National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

2 Educators for Excellence. (2018). *Voices from the Classroom: A Survey of America's Educators*. Educators For Excellence. Retrieved from: <https://e4e.org/news/voices-classroom-survey-americas-educators>

State	Policy		Selection Criteria Does the state require that teacher leaders be selected, at least in part, based on classroom effectiveness?	Incentives and Supports		Preparation	
	Does the state have an explicit teacher leadership policy?	Does the state define explicit teacher leadership roles?		Monetary Incentives	Non-monetary incentives	Does the state require teacher training for leadership roles?	
AL	Yes	Alabama offers a Teacher Leader Certificate, but certification is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	Yes	For admission to a teacher leader program, Alabama requires teachers to attain a master's degree in a teaching field or instructional support area for a Class AA certification.
AK	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
AZ	No	No state policy in this area.*	No	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
AR	Yes	Arkansas offers a "Lead Professional Educator" designation and the Opportunity Community Schools (OCS) program.	Yes	Teachers in Arkansas' Opportunity Community Schools program receive pay supplements.	Districts in Arkansas are encouraged to "provide protected time" for Lead Professional Educators.	Partially	In Arkansas, teachers can complete the state's certified micro-credential(s) for Lead Professional or graduate from a teacher leader program.
CA	No	No state policy in this area.*	No	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
CO	Yes	Colorado has designed a teacher-mentor program.	Yes	Mentor teachers in Colorado receive up to \$2500 per year.	Mentor teachers in Colorado receive release time to support teacher candidates.	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
CT	Yes	Connecticut's "distinguished educator" designation and Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program place teachers into defined leadership roles.	No	Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring mentors receive \$500 for each new teacher assigned to them, which goes into their retirement fund.	Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring leaders receive professional development for which substitute coverage is provided.	Yes	Connecticut requires teachers to complete a form of "advanced education" beyond a master's degree in areas such as mentorship or coaching of teachers.
DE	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
DC	Yes	D.C.'s Educator Talent Pool (ETP) and Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) offer teachers the opportunity to take on a larger role in D.C.'s education system.	No	No	D.C.'s Educator Talent Pool teachers are able to participate in a learning community, as well as provide service and expertise outside of their school.	Yes	In D.C., teachers have the opportunity to participate "in communities of practice."
FL	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
GA	Yes	Georgia's Lead Professional certificate provides an opportunity for teachers to take on a mentor role.	Yes	No	No	Partially	In Georgia, teachers can acquire an advanced teaching degree or certificate.
HI	Yes	Hawaii offers a "Teacher Leader" field as part of their licensure process, but it is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	Partially	In Hawaii, teachers can complete a preparation program in teacher leadership to earn the designation.
ID	Yes	Idaho's Coaching Network provides teachers with the opportunity to become "Teacher Leaders."	No	Idaho's Core Teachers can accept a \$1,000 stipend and 5 graduate school credits from the U. of Idaho.	Idaho's Core Teachers can accept 6 graduate school credits from Boise State without the stipend.	Yes	Once selected, Idaho's Teacher Leaders can gain further experience and expertise in the development of Idaho standards-based teaching.
IL	Yes	Illinois' Teacher Leader endorsement provides teachers with an opportunity to take on a wide variety of leadership roles.	No	No	No	Partially	Illinois teachers may complete a Teacher Leader Program.
IN	No	Indiana no longer has state policy supporting teacher leadership, but the state's teacher compensation law does allow for salary increases for a variety of factors including for an instructional leadership role.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
IA	Yes	Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System provides teachers with an opportunity to take on leadership opportunities that are defined at the district level.	No	Iowa's Teacher Leaders earn compensation commensurate with the responsibilities of the leadership role.	Iowa requires that leadership roles that extend beyond initial and career teacher levels must include additional contract hours or days.	Yes	Districts in Iowa can use Teacher Leadership and Compensation funds to "pay for professional development for teacher leaders."
KS	Yes	Kansas offers a Teacher Leader endorsement, but it is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	Partially	In Kansas, teachers can complete a graduate program or graduate-level teacher leader program for proof of eligibility.

\* Arizona's Educator Talent Pool, California's Exceptional Education Leaders program, and Rhode Island's Educator Leader Talent Pool are all programs that identify potential teacher leaders, however, these programs do not appear linked to any definitive leadership opportunities.

STATE	POLICY		SELECTION CRITERIA	INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS		PREPARATION	
	Does the state have an explicit teacher leadership policy?	Does the state define explicit teacher leadership roles?		Monetary Incentives	Non-monetary incentives	Does the state require teacher training for leadership roles?	
KY	Yes	Kentucky's Educator Career Pathways initiative provides a framework for teacher leadership.	No	No	No	No	Kentucky does not require any leadership development opportunities that are directly linked to the Educator Career Pathways initiative.
LA	Yes	Louisiana offers a Teacher Leaders program and a Teacher Leader endorsement, which offer a variety of defined leadership roles including the recently added "Mentor" and "Content Leader" roles.	Yes	Louisiana's mentor teachers are paid a \$1,000 stipend.	Louisiana's teacher leaders receive additional training and professional development opportunities.	Yes	Louisiana requires Mentors and Content Leaders to complete a specific training program. They also receive continuous professional development in the role.
ME	Yes	Maine's Teach to Lead initiative is designed to support teacher leadership, but is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
MD	Yes	Maryland is in the process of implementing a career ladder with leadership roles such as "Lead Teacher," "Master Teacher," and "Professor Master Teacher."	No	Salary incentives for teachers are based on their progression through Maryland's career ladder.	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
MA	Yes	Massachusetts highlights and elevates teacher leadership roles at the state level, but does not have state policy for leadership opportunities.	No	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
MI	Yes	Michigan offers the Advanced Professional Education Certificate, which is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	Yes	No	No	Yes	Michigan requires applicants to complete either the state's leader program or be National Board certified.
MN	Yes	Minnesota provides guidance for teacher leadership roles and opportunities within the Q Comp Districts.	No	Minnesota offers examples of monetary incentives, but ultimately defers to districts.	Minnesota offers examples of nonmonetary incentives, but ultimately defers to districts.	Yes	Minnesota recommends that teacher leaders receive yearly evaluations, as well as continuous feedback and training.
MS	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
MO	Yes	Missouri's Teacher Academy offers teachers the opportunity to develop leadership skills, but is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	Yes	No	Teachers in Missouri's Teacher Academy are provided professional growth opportunities.	Yes	Teachers in Missouri's Teacher Academy participate in collaborative professional development opportunities.
MT	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
NE	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
NV	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
NH	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
NJ	Yes	New Jersey offers a Teacher Leader Endorsement, but it is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	Yes	No	No	Yes	New Jersey requires teachers to complete an approved leadership program.
NM	Yes	New Mexico offers a Teacher Leadership Network and the Teachers Pursuing Excellence (TPE) program, which provides teachers with the opportunity to take on leadership through a mentor role.	Yes	New Mexico's Teachers Pursuing Excellence mentors receive stipends.	New Mexico's Teachers Pursuing Excellence mentors receive targeted professional development and Coaching Continuum training.	Yes	New Mexico's Teachers Pursuing Excellence mentors receive targeted professional development and Coaching Continuum training.
NY	Yes	New York's Career Ladder Pathways program promotes a wide variety of leadership roles designed at the district level.	No	New York has established that teacher leaders should receive additional compensation.	New York has established that teacher leaders should receive "recognition and job-embedded professional development."	Yes	New York provides teachers in the Career Ladder Pathways Program job-embedded professional development.
NC	Yes	North Carolina's Advance Teaching Roles (ATR) pilot program, which ends after the 2019-2020 school year, provides the opportunity to take on a Teacher Leader role.	Yes	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
ND	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.

State	Policy		Selection Criteria Does the state require that teacher leaders be selected, at least in part, based on classroom effectiveness?	Incentives and Supports		Preparation	
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OH	Yes	Ohio offers a certification route for "Senior Professional" and "Lead Professional" licenses.	Yes	Ohio offers advanced steps on the career ladder with additional compensation allowed by districts.	No	Partially	Ohio requires teachers to have a master's degree for either teacher leader professional license.
OK	Yes	Oklahoma's leadership plan offers a certification route for "Lead" and "Master" teacher leader roles.	No	Oklahoma's Lead and Master teachers receive annual salary supplements of at least \$3,000 and \$5,000, respectively.	Oklahoma's Lead and Master teachers are provided time to develop their instructional leadership and a decreased instructional load.	Yes	Oklahoma provides Lead and Master teachers with 10 and 15 days respectively to develop their instructional leadership abilities.
OR	Yes	Oregon offers a Teacher Leader License, but the designation is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	Yes	No	No	Yes	Oregon requires teachers to complete professional development units to renew the license.
PA	Yes	Pennsylvania offers a Teacher Leader endorsement, but the designation is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	Yes	Pennsylvania requires teachers to complete a specified course to be eligible for the certification.
RI	No	No state policy in this area.*	No	No	No	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
SC	Yes	South Carolina's peer mentor program provides teachers with the opportunity to take on leadership roles.	No	No	In South Carolina, mentors may be eligible for up to 18 renewal credits and districts are required to provide "sufficient time" to carry out the role.	Yes	South Carolina requires mentors to be trained in the Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System.
SD	Yes	South Dakota maintains the Emerging Classroom Leaders Pool, a list of distinguished educators. However, this program is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	South Dakota's Emerging Leaders are considered for membership on advisory boards, task forces, and as candidates for special recognition programs.	No	South Dakota offers professional development opportunities, but they are not tied directly to state policy and funding.
TN	Yes	Tennessee uses the Teacher Leader Model Standards which include a cohesive set of skills and competencies to identify and encourage teacher leaders, but there are no specific leadership opportunities outlined.	No	Tennessee allows districts to differentiate teacher compensation based on a set of criteria that includes leadership roles.	Districts in Tennessee determine whether supports are offered to teacher leaders.	No	Tennessee has Teacher Leader Model Standards but does not require any professional development.
TX	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
UT	Yes	Utah's Teacher Leader designation provides teachers with the opportunity to take on a wide variety of well-defined leadership roles.	Yes	Utah asserts that districts should provide monetary incentive.	Utah asserts that districts should reduce classroom workloads for teacher leaders.	No	No professional development is required for the opportunity.
VT	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.
VA	Yes	Virginia offers a "Teacher as Leader" designation, but the certification is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	Virginia provides training for teacher leaders that supports them in their roles.	Partially	In Virginia, teachers can complete national board certification or a nationally recognized certification program approved by the state.
WA	Yes	Washington's State Fellows' Network provides teachers with the opportunity to participate in leadership opportunities inside and out of the school.	No	No	Washington's State Fellows go to four in-person meetings and may have additional virtual check-ins.	Yes	Washington's State Fellows participate in professional learning to support implementation and professional learning of the state's standards.
WV	Yes	West Virginia offers a "Teacher Leadership for Building School Culture" credential, but the designation is not connected to any defined leadership roles.	No	No	No	Yes	West Virginia requires applicants to hold a professional certificate and complete approved professional learning or coursework.
WI	Yes	Wisconsin's Every Teacher a Leader Summit and Educator Leadership Rendezvous offer teachers the opportunity to develop leadership skills, but neither opportunity is directly connected to defined roles.	No	No	Wisconsin's Every Teacher a Leader Summit participants are given the opportunity to develop their leadership ideas and skills.	Yes	Wisconsin's Educator Leadership Rendezvous is designed to develop leadership and culture building strategies.
WY	No	No state policy in this area.	No	No	No	No	No state policy in this area.

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## State incentives for teacher leaders



## Implementation is key

District implementation of teacher leadership policies is key to a meaningful leadership experience. To better understand how states' teacher leadership policies are being implemented across the nation, NCTQ sampled state-level advocacy groups around the country for their insight regarding how well the state's policy is being implemented at the local level.<sup>3</sup> Advocates' feedback centered around a key theme: teacher leadership policies require buy-in not just at the district level, but also at the school and teacher levels.

Advocates shared that it is incumbent on districts to boldly implement teacher leadership policies and leverage their own resources to enhance state policy. In the absence of strong district leadership, state-level policies tend to fall flat. Additionally, school administrators must be willing to delegate and share responsibilities with teacher leaders. When teachers do not feel true empowerment in their leadership roles, the distribution of responsibilities between administrators and teacher leaders can become contentious.

Finally, teachers themselves need to view the leadership program as legitimate. In order for teachers to be willing to invest their time into leadership programs, they need to believe that the program will continue to be supported in the future. In addition, all teachers (including those who are not leaders) need to feel that the teachers chosen to lead are the right candidates.<sup>4</sup> Without this trust that the program is stable and properly identifying the right teachers to become leaders, the implementation of teacher leadership programs is likely to be more challenging.

When developing, iterating upon, and overseeing teacher leadership policies, state policymakers should ensure that the policy provides enough flexibility for districts to develop leadership plans that utilize local resources and support the needs of their workforce.

<sup>3</sup> Special thanks to all of the organizations who provided feedback on how teacher leadership policies are being implemented, including Advance Illinois, Colorado Succeeds, DFER-CO, Stand for Children Louisiana, Teach Plus NM, and Tennessee SCORE, as well as to New America for providing general feedback.

<sup>4</sup> York-Barr, J., & Duke, K. (2004). What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship. *Review of educational research*, 74(3), 255-316.

## Noteworthy Policies by Region

### Pacific

Within the Pacific region — **Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington — Oregon** offers the best model for leadership policy, as the state's Teacher Leader License opens up multiple career paths for effective teachers. However, the policy lacks explicit leadership roles and meaningful incentives, which means states that are looking for policy ideas should look not only to Oregon, but also to the neighboring Mountain region.

### Mountain

Within the Mountain region — **Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming — Utah's** state policy is among the strongest in the nation (see p. 1). **Colorado** and **New Mexico** also boast comprehensive policies, with **Colorado's** mentorship program standing out due to its selection criteria and the incentives connected to becoming a mentor. Colorado's mentor teachers are offered up to \$2,500 per year, alongside release time to support teacher candidates. **New Mexico's** Teachers Pursuing Excellence (TPE) program offers mentors targeted professional development and training to help them effectively assume their new role.

### South

Within the South Region — **Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas — Arkansas** and **Louisiana** both offer comprehensive teacher-leader policies. **Arkansas'** Lead Professional Educator designation has a strong selection criteria and allows teachers to enter into an impressive variety of leadership roles. **Louisiana** requires that teachers are strategically selected and complete a training program to be eligible for the new mentor and content Teacher Leader roles. Mentor teachers are provided an extra \$1,000 per year and both Teacher Leaders and Content teachers are provided additional professional development opportunities. **Tennessee** has adopted the Teacher Leader Model Standards which define the skills teacher leaders need and publishes examples of different teacher leadership models.

### New England

Among states in the New England region — **Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont — Connecticut's** "distinguished educator" designation and Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program offer two pathways for teachers to take on leadership responsibilities. Distinguished Educators have the opportunity to facilitate professional development and both programs offer teachers the opportunity to serve as mentors. TEAM leaders are provided substitute coverage for activities and professional development, as well as a \$500 stipend for each teacher they are assigned, which goes into their total earnings for purposes of retirement.

### Midwest

The Midwest — **Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wisconsin** — has multiple policies worth highlighting. **Ohio's** certification system has some of the strongest selection criteria in the country with experience, educational attainment, and effectiveness requirements. **Iowa** offers teachers a variety of leadership opportunities with explicit requirements for compensation and work time to perform the role, and **Missouri's** Teacher Academy provides a strong model for leadership development.

### Mid-Atlantic

In the Mid-Atlantic region — **New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York — New York** offers the best example of a strong model for teacher leadership policy. New York's Career Ladder Pathways has established the expectation that every district develops comprehensive career ladders with carefully selected, well-compensated, and continuously trained leaders. That said, the state's policy falls short by failing to explicitly require districts to implement these opportunities.

### South Atlantic

In the South Atlantic — **Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia — Georgia's** Lead Professional (LP) certificate stands out. To apply, teachers must hold the Advanced Professional certificate and have three years of successful evaluations in the preceding five years. Leadership roles such as a mentor positions are offered and teacher leaders are compensated at the discretion of their district.

### Recommendations

To leverage teacher leadership, states should:

- Work with districts to outline formal teacher leader positions and consider establishing clear standards for what defines a teacher leader.
- Require districts to strategically select teacher leaders based on factors including a teacher's expertise in his/her subject area, as well as classroom effectiveness and the ability to lead adults.
- Develop programs or guidelines for professional development that support teacher leaders in their new roles.
- Create requirements or recommendations for incentives that meaningfully compensate and support — in both monetary and non-monetary ways — teachers who assume leadership roles.
- Ensure sufficient flexibility for districts to develop leadership plans that utilize local resources and support the needs of their workforce.



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