

December 15, 2016



Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation

2016 Annual Report

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

State Board of Education

Charles C. Edwards, Jr., President, Des Moines
Michael L. Knedler, Vice President, Council Bluffs
Brooke Axiotis, Des Moines
Michael Bearden, Gladbrook
Bettie Bolar, Marshalltown
Diane Crookham-Johnson, Oskaloosa
Angela English, Dyersville
Mike May, Spirit Lake
Mary Ellen Miller, Wayne County
Robert Nishimwe, Student Member, Des Moines

Administration

Ryan M. Wise, Director and Executive Officer
of the State Board of Education

Division of Policy and Communications

Becky Slater, Education Program Consultant
Lora Rasey, Education Program Consultant

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number: 515-281-5295, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-4544, telephone number: 312-730-1560, FAX number: 312-730-1576, TDD number: 877-521-2172, email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.....	2
Table of Contents	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Strengths And Successes.....	7
At the State Level:	7
At the District Level:.....	7
At the Teacher Level:	7
Needs and Recommendations.....	8
Conclusion.....	10
Appendix 1	11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Division VII of House File 215 established the Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation (CELC). The Legislature charged the Commission with three primary responsibilities:

- Monitor the implementation of Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation System.
- Evaluate and make recommendations to the Department on school districts' applications for approval of teacher leadership plans and on the expenditure of money appropriated for the development of Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation System.
- Review the use and effectiveness of the funds distributed to school districts for supplemental assistance to high-need schools. *[Funding for this area has not been allocated. The Commission's responsibilities in this area are on hold.]*

In addition to these primary responsibilities, the Commission is also required to submit its findings and any recommendations for changes to Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation System in an annual report to the Director of the Iowa Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the General Assembly.

Since beginning their work in August 2013, Commission members have come together to guide the successful development of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System. In the past, the Commission's primary focus has been the development and implementation of a process for evaluating school districts' teacher leadership and compensation plans as well as reviewing and scoring submitted plans. Now the Commission is shifting its focus to the other areas of responsibility given to it by the General Assembly in Division VII of House File 215.

The Commission will use this report as an opportunity to share some of the findings and recommendations it has discussed with the Department during its meetings. This report is intended to communicate what the 19 Commission members have heard and observed during the past year regarding TLC—not all items are representative of all districts. Also, this report does not constitute a summative evaluation of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System. Rather, it is intended to provide one perspective on the current state of TLC.

In addition to this report, districts complete an annual end of year report on progress toward locally-determined TLC goals using measures identified in their TLC plans. A statewide summary of these reports can be found [here](#). The Department of Education has also contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to complete an outside evaluation of the TLC system. AIR is conducting surveys, interviews, focus groups, and an analysis of longitudinal student achievement data to determine the progress being made toward state TLC goals. AIR's research brief with initial findings can be found [here](#). We anticipate having additional results from this work in early 2017.

INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system began with a planning year in 2013-2014. Thirty-nine districts implemented their plans beginning in August of 2014. In the 2015-2016 school year, an additional 76 districts from across Iowa implemented their TLC plans. In August 2016 all remaining districts began implementation of TLC plans. As in the first years of implementation, the Commission continues to hear positive feedback from both teachers and administrators. Additionally, data from district end of year reports, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), as well as anecdotal information provided by the Commission indicates that progress is being made toward each of the state TLC goals:

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

- The minimum teacher salary in Iowa was raised to \$33,500.
- Approximately 25% of Iowa teachers now hold a leadership position in their district.

Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.

- 91% of districts reported *mostly or fully meeting* the goals they set for attracting and retaining teachers.
- According to AIR, 88% of teachers indicated that they *agree somewhat or agree strongly* with the statement: "I look forward to returning to my school next year."

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

- 87% of districts reported *mostly or fully meeting* the goals they set for increasing collaboration.
- AIR found that significantly larger percentages of teachers in TLC districts *agreed strongly* to satisfaction with teacher collaboration than teachers in non-TLC districts.
- More respondents in TLC districts than non-TLC districts reported participating in various collaboration activities at least once a week. Differences were larger for activities related to improving teaching practices and working with students.

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

- 87% of districts reported *mostly or fully meeting* the goals they set for rewarding professional growth and effective teaching.
- AIR found that respondents in TLC districts were more likely to indicate the availability of leadership roles, to be familiar with those roles, and to *agree strongly* that teacher leadership roles are effective than respondents in non-TLC districts.

Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

- 49% of districts reported *mostly or fully meeting* the goals they set for improving student achievement.
- TLC districts did not outperform non-TLC districts in the first year of TLC implementation according to AIR.

The Commission understands that student achievement is a lagging indicator. Members of the Commission know that districts need time to train teacher leaders, teacher leaders need time to develop expertise in their new roles, systems need time to adapt to change, and that an implementation dip is expected, especially in the first year of implementation. For these reasons the Commission is not surprised by the current rate of progress on student achievement goals.

There are other indicators of the positive impact TLC is having throughout the state. Districts reported mostly or fully meeting 77% of all local TLC goals. AIR's evaluation also found that 77% of teachers and 87% of leaders agreed that TLC is effective improving instruction and teacher satisfaction. Additionally, respondents in TLC districts reported more frequent student-focused supports and were significantly more likely to *strongly agree* that the professional development they participated in was of high-quality.

The remainder of this report is dedicated to sharing what the Commission has observed to be strengths and successes of the system. Commission members believe that on the whole Iowa's TLC system is on track to meet its goals and needs to "stay the course". At this time the Commission is not recommending changes to the legislation, however they do provide general recommendations for continuing implementation of the TLC system.

STRENGTHS AND SUCCESSES

Commission members shared the following themes related to the positive development of the TLC system over the past year.

AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- There is excitement now that TLC is at full implementation.
- A high-quality statewide TLC evaluation system has been designed and implemented by the Department of Education.
- Collaboration between districts and between Area Education Agencies has increased.
- Schools and districts are increasingly engaged in a systematic approach to school improvement.
- Districts and educators are provided with an ongoing system of support through the Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, and state professional organizations.

AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL:

- A wide variety of supports are available for teachers and administrators.
- Other needs across the system have been uncovered, and are beginning to be addressed, as districts undertake this systemic work.
- Research is available on effective strategies that can be used to improve both systems and instruction.
- Increased professional learning and dedicated leadership roles have provided better direction for professional learning communities.

AT THE TEACHER LEVEL:

- Teachers are more empowered.
- More professional learning options are available to teachers, including large group, small group, and individualized professional learning opportunities.
- Teachers are being compensated for their time, leadership, and expertise.
- Differentiated career paths are available.
- Supports for new teachers have increased.

NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission members also provided suggestions for how to ensure that effective TLC implementation continues.

- Ensure students remain the focus and ultimate benefactors of TLC.
- Provide increased strategic communication with parents and communities to build awareness and understanding of TLC and its impact.
- Provide ongoing supports to districts at varying stages of implementation, including:
 - *Preserving Area Education Agencies' funding to ensure the continuation of professional development opportunities.*
 - *Creating ways for districts to share their experiences implementing TLC including successful practices, barriers they have encountered, and how challenges were overcome.*
 - *Disseminating guidance on how and when teachers should transition in and out of leadership roles.*
 - *Providing districts with strategies to use when they are unable to fill teacher leader roles.*
 - *Sharing methods districts can use to ensure the next generation of teacher leaders are being developed.*
 - *Communicating the importance of clearly defining teacher leader roles and being transparent about teacher leader responsibilities.*
 - *Developing a shared understanding of what effective teaching looks like to ensure smooth implementation and growth.*
 - *Providing professional learning for district administrators to help them transition to leading a local teacher leadership system.*
- Address common TLC myths including the beliefs that TLC takes good teachers out of the classroom and that TLC funding will end after the 2016-17 school year.
- Secure ongoing funding for the Department of Education so they can continue to provide support and coordinate the systematic evaluation of TLC.
- Assess the effectiveness of the Iowa Teaching Standards in evaluating teacher leaders.

- Continue to refine the evaluation process by:
 - *Including the impact on culture and climate in the evaluation of the system.*
 - *Determining if any common measures should be used by districts as a part of program evaluation.*
 - *Including student survey data in the evaluation process.*
 - *Establishing multi-year implementation benchmarks.*
 - *Ensuring accountability and reporting requirements don't take away from the focus on instructional improvement.*

CONCLUSION

The Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation is proud of the work districts have done to implement their teacher leadership plans and that Iowa has become a national leader in this area. State Departments of Education, universities, and national organizations have reached out to learn from Iowa's teacher leadership experience and expertise.

The Commission operates with the understanding that implementation takes time and that significant improvements in student achievement are unlikely to manifest in the short term. Other school systems such as those in Ontario, New York City, and Charlotte took 4 to 10 years to show the impact of large scale reforms and initiatives. However, changes in retention rates, collaboration opportunities, career opportunities, and job satisfaction will serve as leading indicators that TLC is achieving its goals.

The Commission recognizes that Teacher Leadership and Compensation is the largest school improvement initiative to take place in their lifetimes. This pride and recognition makes them only more aware of the importance of "getting this right." Despite the existence of natural growing pains, the Commission is encouraged by the progress districts are making and the impact TLC is having. Commission members believe that TLC truly has the power to end the educational lottery that continues to exist and ensure that every child, no matter what district, school, or classroom they are in, receives a world-class education.

The Commission also understands that TLC does not, and cannot, operate in a vacuum. TLC must be considered a part of an overall approach to strengthening achievement in Iowa. Other state policy and funding decisions have an impact not only on how TLC is implemented but how it is perceived. In addition, the Commission strongly recommends that funds are allocated to support the critical TLC work being done at the Department of Education and in Area Education Agencies. The oversight, coordination, collaboration, and evaluation these agencies provide is essential to the long-term success of Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation system.

APPENDIX 1

2016-2017 Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation (CELC)

Name	Organization	Location
Sue Alborn-Yilek	University of Northern Iowa	Cedar Falls
Troy Arthur	Parent	Council Bluffs
Lisa Bartusek	Iowa Association of School Boards	Des Moines
Mike Beranek	Teacher	West Des Moines
Mary Jane Cobb	Iowa State Education Association	Des Moines
Joan Corbin	Iowa Association of School Boards	Pella
Kevin Ericson	Teacher	Nevada
Paul Gausman	Superintendent	Sioux City
Mary Jo Hainstock	Superintendent	Vinton-Shellsburg
Sam Harding	Iowa Association of School Boards	Green County
Roark Horn	School Administrators of Iowa	Clive
Donna Lee Huston	Teacher	Twin Cedars
Jeff Orvis	Teacher	Waverly-Shell Rock
Diane Pratt	Teacher	Fort Dodge
Ole Skattum	Teacher	Western Dubuque
Jeff Stanley	Wells Enterprises Inc.	Le Mars
Paula Vincent	Heartland AEA Administrator	Johnston
Doug Wheeler	Superintendent	Saydel
Judy Zeka	Teacher	Le Mars