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**Teacher Leadership and
Compensation System**

2018-19

Statewide End-of-Year

Report Summary



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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 4 |
| Overall Findings | 5 |
| Attract and Retain | 6 |
| Collaboration..... | 8 |
| Reward Professional Growth | 10 |
| Student Achievement..... | 12 |
| Testimonials from End-of-Year Reports | 14 |

Introduction

Iowa is leading the nation with the state's Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system, which is the most comprehensive initiative of its kind in the United States.

The TLC system rewards effective teachers with leadership opportunities and increased pay, attracts promising new teachers with competitive starting salaries and more support, and fosters greater collaboration for all teachers to learn from each other.

The overriding philosophy of the system is multi-pronged but boils down to this: Improving student learning requires improving the instruction they receive every day. There is no better way to do this than to empower Iowa's best teachers to lead the effort.

Through the system, Teacher Leaders take on additional responsibilities, including helping colleagues analyze data, assisting in fine-tuning instructional strategies, coaching and co-teaching.

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.

The 2018-19 school year marked the third year that every district in the state has implemented TLC. The state allocated \$159,466,485 in fiscal year 2019 to support districts in their TLC implementation efforts. Every district received \$326.50 per pupil to implement their plans.

Each district is required to keep an updated TLC plan on file with the Iowa Department of Education (the Department). Districts' original plans and approved changes can be found on the TLC page of the Department website. Since 2014, when the first cohort of districts began the TLC process, the Department has approved over 1,500 plan changes.

Not to rest on their laurels, districts continually reflect on their progress toward the vision and goals of their TLC plans. The process helps districts make changes to ensure that they leverage TLC to influence their school improvement process.

As part of the plan, each district is required to provide a description of how it will determine the impact and effectiveness of TLC, including short-term and long-term measures. This report summarizes the data provided in end-of-year reports submitted by all 329 school districts during the 2018-19 school year. Each district's complete, end-of-year report is available on the [Department's reporting site](#).

Overall Findings

Teacher leadership has become a key lever for school performance in districts across the state. Driven by a statewide vision, districts are reporting that the program has now become a fixture in their schools' functioning, amplifying teacher voice and contributing to increased student achievement. Each district has designed and refined their program to align to their local needs. The following themes were evident in end-of-year reports from across the state:

- Student achievement continues to improve. In the last three years, student achievement has grown by 8 percentage points. In the 2016-17 school year, 50 percent of schools said they mostly met or met their student achievement goals; that increased to 58 percent in the 2018-19 school year.
- TLC is impacting attracting and retaining teachers. Among districts, 42 percent said they fully met their goals in 2018-19, compared to just 31 percent two years before.
- Teacher leadership is promoting a collaborative culture where teachers share instructional practices. Districts and schools have adjusted their school schedules to allow time for teacher teams to meet. Teacher leaders have developed norms, protocols, and documentation systems that maximize this meeting time and communicate their outcomes to other leaders.
- Schools continue to expand and redefine the roles of teacher leaders. Districts and schools have modified their plans in order to best use teacher leadership resources to impact school improvement efforts such as: curriculum alignment, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), behavior needs, and equity issues.
- Teacher Leaders are adding teacher voice in school and district decision-making processes. They are providing a crucial bridge between building and district leadership and the classroom that leads to more informed, sustainable strategic plans.
- Teacher Leaders are partnering with school and building leaders to design and deliver high-quality, job-embedded professional development. Many districts have identified roles of Teacher Leaders to include determining which topics are most important for improving instructional practice and leading workshops for their colleagues. Teacher Leaders are also modeling the new strategies in classrooms and providing ongoing support as teachers implement what they learned.
- Teacher Leaders are promoting continuous improvement by leading teams in data-informed decision making. More than ever before, teachers are working together to examine student performance on internal assessments and designing instruction to increase student achievement. Embedded in Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Teacher Leaders are equipping teachers with the skills to match interventions to student needs and assess their effectiveness.

The July 2019 Statewide TLC Conference provided districts with an opportunity to assess their current programs and plan for improvements. Based on Joellen Killion's *A Systemic Approach to Elevating Teacher Leadership*, the conference highlighted best practices in the following areas:

- Clarifying the purpose, roles and responsibilities of Teacher Leaders;
- Creating a school culture and structures that support teacher leadership;
- Cultivating dispositions for teacher leadership; and
- Assessing the impact of teacher leadership programs on student success, teaching quality, school culture, and school improvement.

Districts left the conference with concrete next steps to more fully meet their local goals in the 2019-2020 school year. We learned from the conference that districts would like ongoing support in the goal area of student achievement.

Attract and Retain

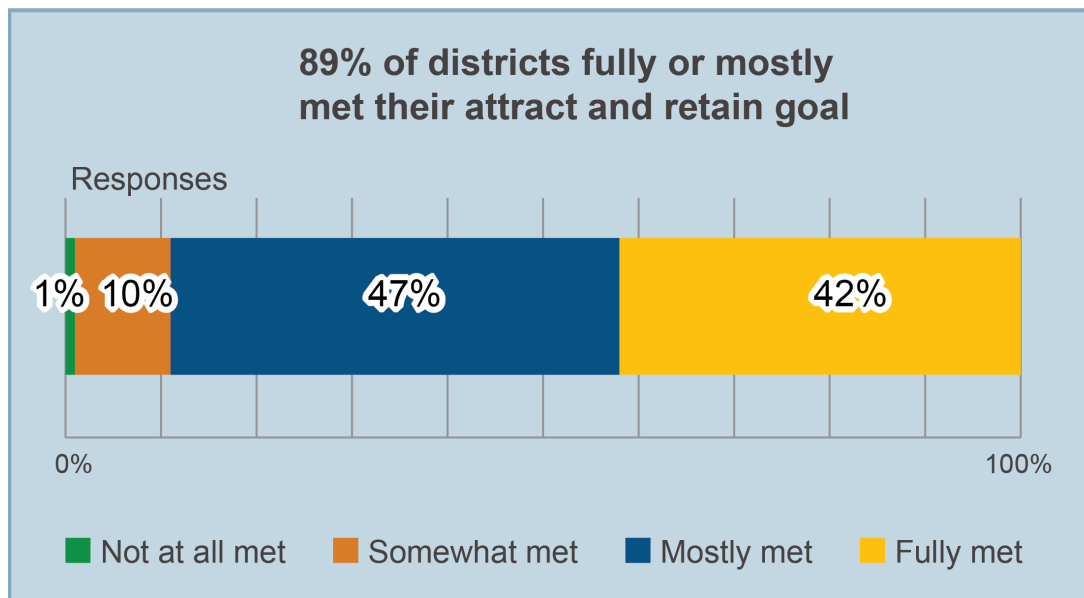
Goals

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.

Summary

Through larger base salaries and additional opportunities for teachers to have meaningful leadership roles, districts are attracting and retaining teachers. Improved mentoring programs provide support to new and career teachers.



In 2017-18, 89% of districts fully or mostly met their local “attract and retain” goal. Data from the 2018-19 school year showed that districts maintained those results with 89% of districts again reporting that they fully or mostly met their local “attract and retain” growth. In 2018-19, 9% more districts reported fully meeting this goal.

Key Findings

- **Most districts cited increased rates of teacher retention that they attributed to the work of Teacher Leaders.** *Center Point Urbana* shared that their *Mentor and Induction Coaches* improve the entry skills of teachers new to the profession, increasing the success and sustainability of new teachers. *Hampton Dumont* reported they are able to retain teachers that commute, despite openings closer to them because they feel supported in their district through TLC.
- **Districts continued to refine their Teacher Leaders support of new teachers.** Many districts compensate teachers for serving as Mentor Teachers and provide structures to make the role meaningful. *Woodward Granger* leaders shared that two TLC Coaches planned and designed a comprehensive in-house mentoring program for both first- and second-year staff members. 95% of

staff who participated are returning to the district for FY20. In addition, the TLC staff members that taught the class found a newfound purpose and were rejuvenated to teach their peers. Garner Hayfield shared that new teachers felt supported by their Mentor and that the activities made a difference in their practice. The Mentoring Program Facilitator worked with the TLC Coordinator to help connect mentoring program activities with district goals and initiatives.

- **Teacher Leaders support new and veteran teachers in improving their instruction, leading to increased job satisfaction.** Teachers across the state cited their work with a Teacher Leader as helpful in increasing their effectiveness in the classroom. In Treynor, one teacher said, “With the help of an Instructional Coach, I have been able to discover new teaching approaches and methods, utilizing these tools under the guidance of a trained instructor.” A veteran teacher from Davis County shared that they enjoy meeting with their coach to discuss questions. They stated “It’s wonderful to get her input since she has a lot more experience than I do teaching the subject.”
- **Many districts reported that the teacher leadership program created a school culture where people want to work.** Southeast Polk leaders shared that they earned the designation of a Top 150 Workplace from the Des Moines Register. The designation takes into account a number of constructs, and those factors directly link to the culture and climate of the workplace, how people feel about working at Southeast Polk, and their levels of job efficacy, engagement, and satisfaction in their work. The district is convinced that teacher leadership and shared leadership, as manifested in the TLC system that has been in place for five years, go a long way in attracting and retaining teachers because of the inherent support, emphasis on teacher growth, and job-ladder opportunities for teachers offered by the system. Dunkerton strongly believes their turn around in teacher retention rate is due to the effectiveness and support from their TLC team.

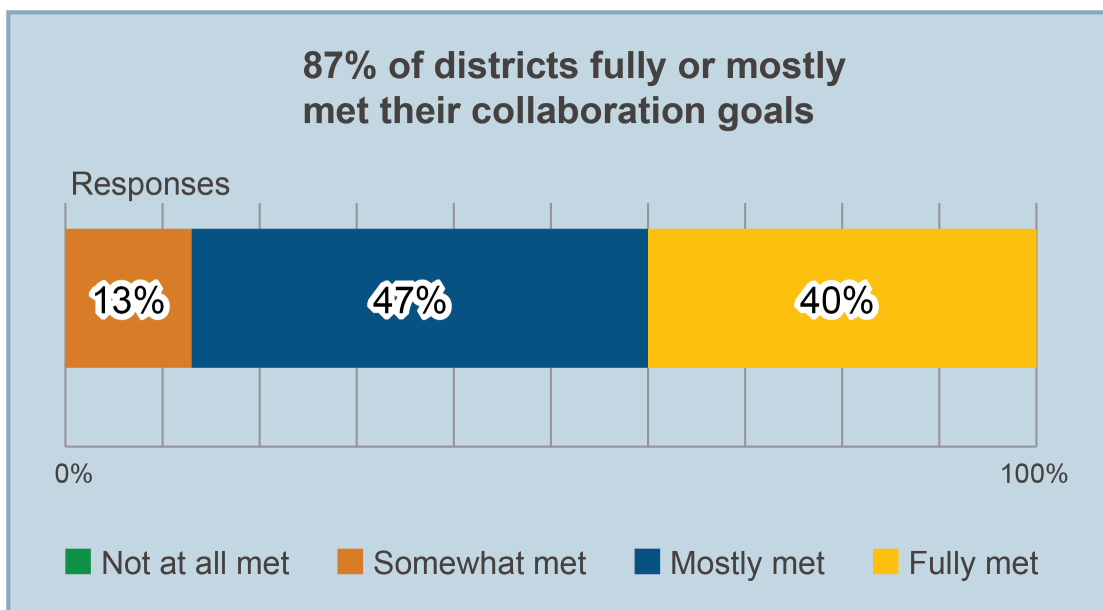
Collaboration

Goal

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

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) as identified in the Iowa Professional Development Model.



In 2017-18, 88% of districts fully or mostly met their local collaboration goal. 2018-19 data showed that 87% of districts fully or mostly met their local collaboration goal.

Key Findings

- **Teacher Leaders served as the leads for Professional Learning Communities in the building.** *Wilton* leaders reported that Model Teachers became the building experts in scoring tasks and then served as team leads as they rolled out Authentic Intellectual Work to all remaining staff. The small group structure assisted with collaboration, as they felt voices tend to get lost in large group activities. *Tri-Center* reported that Teachers Leaders help during professional development focused on formative assessment and PLC implementation.
- **Teacher Leaders facilitated visits across classrooms that promoted ongoing collaboration among all teachers in the building.** *Western Dubuque* leaders reported that 100% of teachers participated in two teaching labs in which an Instructional Coach led the group through the collaboration process of planning, observation, and reflection during the school day. In *South Hamilton*, Instructional Coaches gave each teacher a chance to see a snapshot of several different classrooms and provide feedback on their observations. This led to many discussions

about best practices and allowed each teacher to appreciate teacher peers. In Ankeny, teachers new to the district had the opportunity to collaborate and observe one another through Learning Focused Interactions (LFI) using guided questions and reflection techniques that align to an individual's professional goal in a growth area. There were 291 LFI's throughout the year and release time was spent observing, reflecting and setting goals between the teacher, Coach and Mentor.

- **Many districts reported that teacher leaders coached teachers through coaching cycles and reflective practices.** This support equipped classroom teachers with skills that lead to continuous improvement. In Spencer, 98% of teachers who participated in a coaching cycle reported an increase in their reflective capacity. Ninety-seven percent of teachers stated that they would encourage their colleagues to participate in a coaching cycle. In Des Moines, 98% of teachers reported that they felt comfortable taking risks when working with an Instructional Coach. A survey given in Grinnell showed that district personnel felt the Instructional Coaches they worked with were effective and consistently provided communication, information and facilitation of classroom/teacher needs based on increasing student achievement based on the Iowa Core Standards.
- **Many districts reported that teacher leaders collaborated with school and district leaders in decision-making processes.** In West Liberty, Instructional Coaches collaborated with building leaders and school board members with the design of the district's strategic planning. In all meetings, Coaches were included to gain insights and perspectives about district needs and then to tailor the plan to actually meet the needs of those in classrooms. Clinton reported a Peer Review process in which the Teacher Quality Committee and Building Teacher Leaders continue to review data of instructional audits.
- **Districts collaborated with other districts to enhance their teacher leadership programs.** In Andrew, the entire teaching staff attended a two-day Professional Learning Communities (PLC) conference hosted in a neighboring school district. This allowed all staff members to gain the understanding/background on the PLC process and how to move their teams forward.

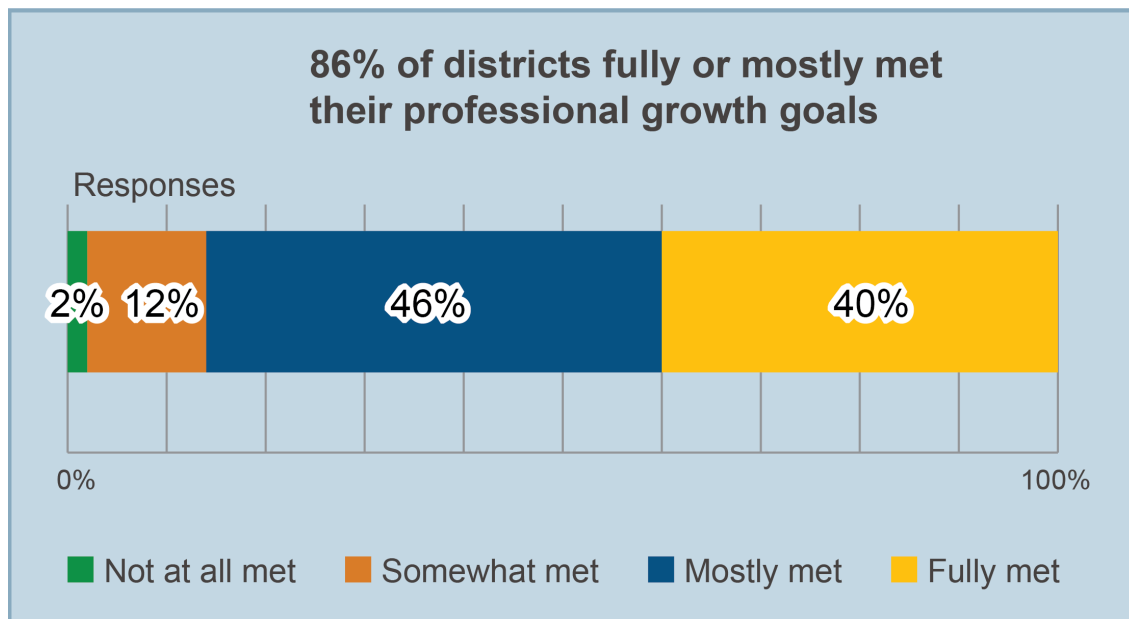
Reward Professional Growth

Goal

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

Summary

TLC offered new pathways for exceptional leaders to share their best practices with colleagues, without necessarily having to leave their own classrooms. A review of end-of-year reports showed that teachers at all levels -- both Teacher Leaders and those who benefit from Teacher Leaders' shared expertise -- are benefitting from the new roles.



In 2017-18, 84% of districts fully or mostly met their local goal. In 2018-19, districts showed a gain of 2% in this area, increasing to 86%.

Key Findings

- **Many districts reported that Teacher Leaders support the professional growth of teachers across the district.** In *Woodbine and Boyer*, 93% of teachers felt like they could use the TLC Leaders to help with their personal professional development goals. Leaders in *CAM* reported that Teacher Leaders supported "Bring Your Own Professional Development" days where teachers selected areas of the *The System for Teacher and Student Achievement (TAP)* rubric to focus on. In addition, Teacher Leaders observed them using the TAP rubric and all teachers conducted a peer observation using the rubric, leading to an increase from 3.03 to 3.38 (out of 4) in the instructional indicators of the rubric. *Rock Valley* stated "professional development has become

much more robust. Teacher Leaders are heavily involved in the development and implementation of professional learning. More time is spent planning professional development days as well as being planned well in advance. Professional development has become much more individualized.”

- **A majority of districts reported providing teacher leaders with professional development tailored to their roles and aspirations.** Teachers Individual Career Development Plans (ICDP) are supported through the work of Teacher Leaders. In Dubuque, all Mentors and secondary Instructional Coaches received significant training through the New Teacher Center focusing on coaching skills and tools. These leaders kept records/logs of the number of times they meet with teachers individually and in groups. They recorded the types of tools they used, the number of times they used these tools and they solicited feedback through peer feedback throughout the school year. A Woodbine survey showed that 93% of teachers felt they used the TLC Leaders to help with their professional development goals. Belmond-Klemme used two Instructional Coaches to help staff create ICDPs that are aligned with district goals and include documentation of collaboration.
- **Teacher leaders continue to build their skills by being involved in key initiatives.** Cedar Falls leaders reported that Teacher Leaders involved in the Self-Assessment of Multi-Tiered System of Supports Implementation (SAMI) process have learned a great deal about analyzing data, finding root cause, and planning for improvement. Spencer shared that their Instructional Mentors/Coaches participated in Jim Knight and Authentic Intellectual Work training. In order to lead data-driven professional development initiatives, they were also trained in Data-Inquiry Cycle.
- **Teacher leader roles include the responsibilities of Curriculum and Professional Development Leaders.** Reports show that Teacher Leaders focus on curriculum and content development. Benton continued to emphasize the peer review process during the 2018-19 school year. Once again, the Instructional Coaches and Curriculum & Professional Development Leaders (CPD) assisted in the process by either being a peer reviewer or by working with groups and/or pairs to support their goals related to the “Characteristics of Effective Instruction.” Instructional Coaches met individually with teachers to address areas of focus identified by the teacher. Forest City included a job description for a Professional Learning Coach that highlighted to serve as a leader around building and district initiatives (i.e., science curriculum, student-centeredness, MTSS) and to assist with the planning and delivery of professional development. A leader in Independence said, “We know that this involves aligning curriculum, instruction and assessments to Iowa Core. The TLC process has provided the support needed for teachers to do this work.”

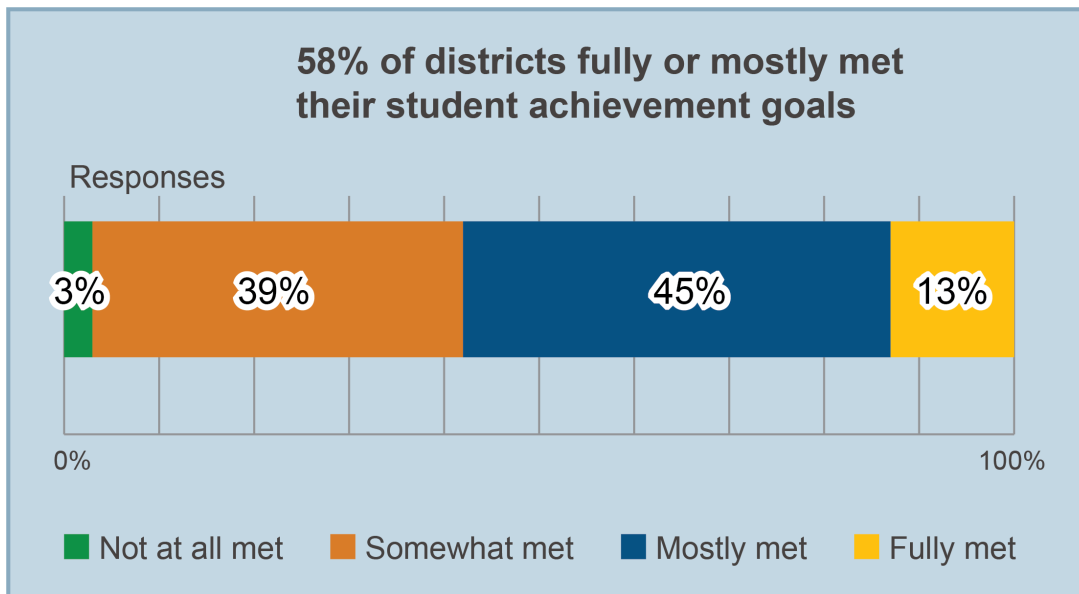
Student Achievement

Goal

Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

Summary

In their end-of-year reports, most districts shared increases in academic performance, graduation rates, college entrance rates, and other indicators. Districts used various data sources to assess the impact of their TLC program on academic performance such as internal assessments, universal screeners, and teacher observation. Due to the changes in the Iowa Assessment, districts did not yet have that data when they completed their end-of-year report. Most districts reported TLC as one of several factors contributing to the student achievement gain, and they saw a greater tie between the program and student achievement as districts refined their implementation of the TLC system.



In 2017-18, 56% of districts fully or mostly met their local goal. 2018-19 data showed that districts increased by 2% in this area, increasing to 58%.

Key Findings

- **Teacher Leaders supported classroom teachers in analyzing student assessment data to inform instructional planning.** In *South Tama*, leaders reported that the proficiency of the 1,191 participating students increased from 13.7% to 61.4% after a coaching cycle. Leaders in *Atlantic* reported that after their student-centered coaching cycles, student proficiency went from 5% on the pretest to 80% on the post test. In *Twin Cedars*, the Coach worked with teachers to review the data and modeled small group and whole group interventions in the classroom. 80% of elementary staff utilized an Instructional Coach or model teacher to assist in evaluating data including Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) universal screening, FAST progress monitoring, and monthly data reviews of the district's reading curriculum weekly assessments.

Instructional decisions were made based on the data review and knowledge gained through professional development initiatives (*Path to Reading Success in School Sites (PRESS)*, *Dyslexia and Reading Corps Trainings*). Surveys and teacher reflections indicate that 83% of staff is confident in matching interventions to student need. Eldora-New Providence shared student achievement has increased as a result of improved instruction. This is measured annually through analysis and noted increase of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing Rausch Unit (RIT) scores (Reading--220.4 to 225.0 in grade 11 from the fall of 2017-18 to the fall of 2018-19, Math--233.4 to 238.5 from the fall of 2017-18 to the fall of 2018-19).

- **Districts reported a correlation between the implementation of teacher leadership and student achievement.** Leaders in Adair-Casey reported that over 95% of the teachers said that the Instructional Coach provided and supported the teachers' implementation of effective strategies in the classroom. Eighty percent of the teachers said they have seen improvement in student learning as a result of the Instructional Coach. In Starmont, 92% of instructional coaching partnerships resulted in the teacher's instructional goals being met. Additionally, all coaching cycles that collected pre-assessment and post-assessment data showed an increase in student achievement throughout the coaching cycle. South Tama stated "with the 1,191 students worked with during the 2018-19 school year, 13.7% of the students were proficient before working with the Instructional Coach/teacher in a coaching cycle. Following a coaching cycle, this number jumps to 61.4% students proficient."
- **Coaching delivered by Teacher Leaders is equipping students with key skills for academic achievement and workplace success.** In Turkey Valley, Teacher Leaders provided instructional coaching on Project-Based Learning. Leaders reported that through this process, teachers were able to see growth in their students in the areas of motivation, engagement, problem-solving, collaboration/group work, public speaking, and producing high-quality products of their learning.
- **Teacher Leaders support student achievement through the work of social-emotional, at-risk, and mental health support.** In Linn Mar, MTSS coaches have received extensive training in the areas of social-emotional and mental health. They have developed a plan to strengthen teachers' skills and provide support as they implement strategies. Eighty-five percent of secondary staff and 100% of elementary staff believe the MTSS coaching position has helped build their toolboxes of strategies to work with the struggling student, thereby positively impacting student achievement. The at-risk program in Colfax-Mingo is integrated with the TLC program and collaborative problem solving at the student and program level is done throughout the school year. Iowa Falls reports on their Success Coaches. Success Coaches worked directly with teachers to support them in behavioral and academic interventions that would help students be more successful. They guided data collection and set up interventions that were specific to student needs.

Testimonials from End-of-Year Reports

Before TLC funding, the IKM-Manning School District did not have opportunities for staff to be paid for leadership. Any leadership taken on by staff was done through volunteerism. Staff was often not compensated for their extra effort, work and time. The TLC funding has allowed us to create a Teacher Leader System that provides compensation for leadership work. In addition, the TLC program has allowed us to study district needs and create a system to meet those needs, as well as adjust our system as needs change over time. This system would not be possible without TLC funding.

Marshalltown teachers on TLC roles: TLC roles have contributed to improve my classroom teaching skills and strategies. Instructional Coaches and Data Team facilitators have helped immensely. Greatly appreciated the assistance and expertise of the Technology Integration Coaches. Data Team Facilitators help keep us focused and on track. We are seeing progress in literacy achievement as measured by FAST. This is a reflection of the extensive work and support of the teacher leadership positions.

Pleasant Valley “When looking at how to improve student learning through our Teacher Leadership System we have targeted the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all teachers. A strong viable curriculum that all teachers are invested in is the first step in ensuring student success.”

PK-teachers strongly agreed/agreed that Instructional Coaches have:

- Helped me to improve my instructional practices 98%
- Helped support student learning goals in my classroom 99%
- Promoted a collaborative culture 99%

College Community As of April 2019, data showed math standards being “met” or “exceeded” at a rate of 75.01%. In literacy, the rate was 68.78%. While we did not meet our 80% goal, we have shown improvement over previous years’ results. Last year these scores were 72.1% in math (+2.91) and 67.9% in literacy (+.88). In 2015-2016, these scores were close to 60% in both math and literacy. We have continued to show growth and improvement in these areas over the past four years. We feel that future professional learning and continued PLC support will help these scores continue to improve.

Keokuk Through the TLC grant we have continued to evolve and build upon a robust mentoring program for our new teachers. Due to that we found that our mentors who were full-time teachers were not able to provide the student-focused mentoring that our new teachers need, we have moved so that our full release instructional coaches meet with our new teachers at minimum once a week for student-centered coaching. Our three full release Instructional Coaches have all received professional development by the New Teacher Center. This year we expanded into the introduction of NTC’s Optimal Learning Environment as a mode of ensuring that our students and staff have a learning environment that is conducive to accelerating our students’ academic learning as well as demonstrate growth both socially and emotionally.