

Commission Report Teacher Leadership and Compensation

January 2022

INTRODUCTION

Iowa continues to be innovative in leveraging the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System towards school improvement efforts. TLC is identified as one of the most comprehensive initiatives of its kind in the United States. The 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-faceted, but boils down to the following baseline: Improving student learning requires improving the instruction they receive every day. There is no better way to do this than to empower Iowa's teacher leaders to lead the way.

Through the TLC system, teacher leaders take on additional responsibilities such as supporting colleagues, analyzing data, assisting with instructional strategies both in-person and online, coaching and co-teaching, technology integration and induction of new staff.

The goals of the TLC system are to:

- Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries as well as providing 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 responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

The 2020-21 school year marked the fifth year that every district in the state has implemented TLC. The state allocated \$167,281,928 in fiscal year 2021 (FY 21) to support districts in their TLC implementation efforts. Each district received \$340.89 per pupil to implement their plans.

Districts are required to keep an updated TLC plan on file with the Iowa Department of Education (the Department). District TLC Leadership Teams meet to assess the impact of their plans and revise as needed. District plans may be found at <https://reports.educateiowa.gov/EOYPublic/Home/Plan>

Districts continually reflect on their progress towards the vision and goals of their TLC plans. This reflection helps districts make changes to ensure that they leverage TLC to influence their school improvement process. As part of the plan, each district is asked 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 school districts during the 2020-21 school year. This data represents views, goal progress, and level of implementation as interpreted by district teachers, teacher leaders and administrators. It should be noted that these results reflect a year of unprecedented challenges for our education system, and should be reviewed and interpreted with this understanding. Each district's complete End-of-Year report is available at <https://reports.educateiowa.gov/EOYPublic/>

[Link to full Statewide End-of-Year 2020-2021 Report](#)

STATE GOAL # 1 - ATTRACT AND RETAIN

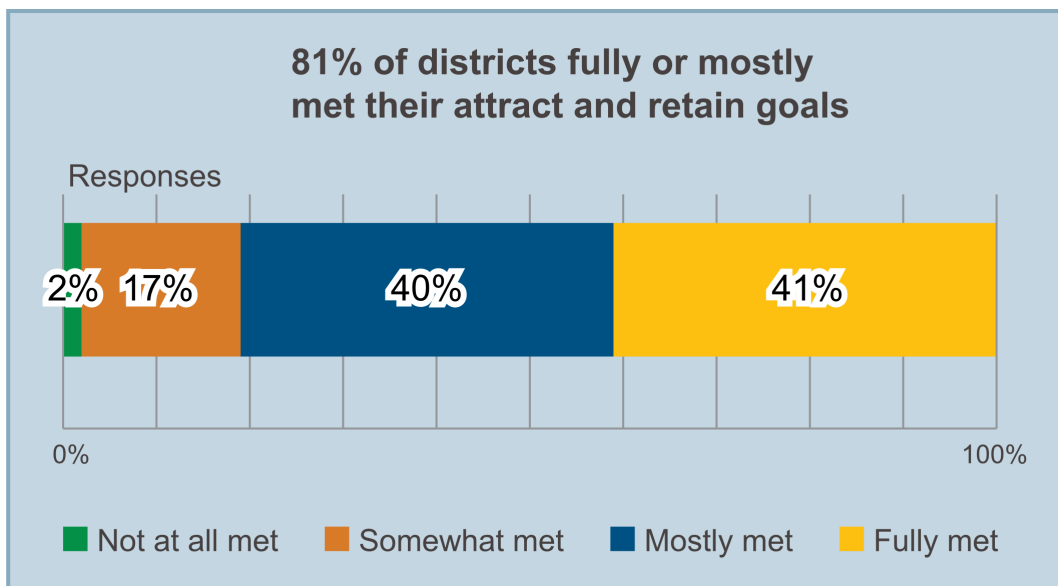
GOALS

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

Retain effective career teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.

SUMMARY

Through opportunities for teachers to have meaningful leadership roles, as well as the implementation of improved hiring, mentoring and induction programs, districts reported they fully or mostly met their goals in attracting and retaining new-to-the-profession as well as career teachers. TLC opportunities around this include meaningful leadership roles, and implementation of improved hiring, mentoring and induction programs.



KEY FINDINGS

Districts reported:

- TLC-based mentoring and induction supported new-to-the-profession teachers in personal well-being in addition to professional growth.
- An increase in the effectiveness of beginning teachers was noted, as a result of TLC-based mentoring.
- Teacher leaders provided support and resources that attributed to the success of new teachers.
- Despite the positive impact of TLC on teacher retention rates, there continues to be a high need for a concerted effort around teacher recruitment and retention.

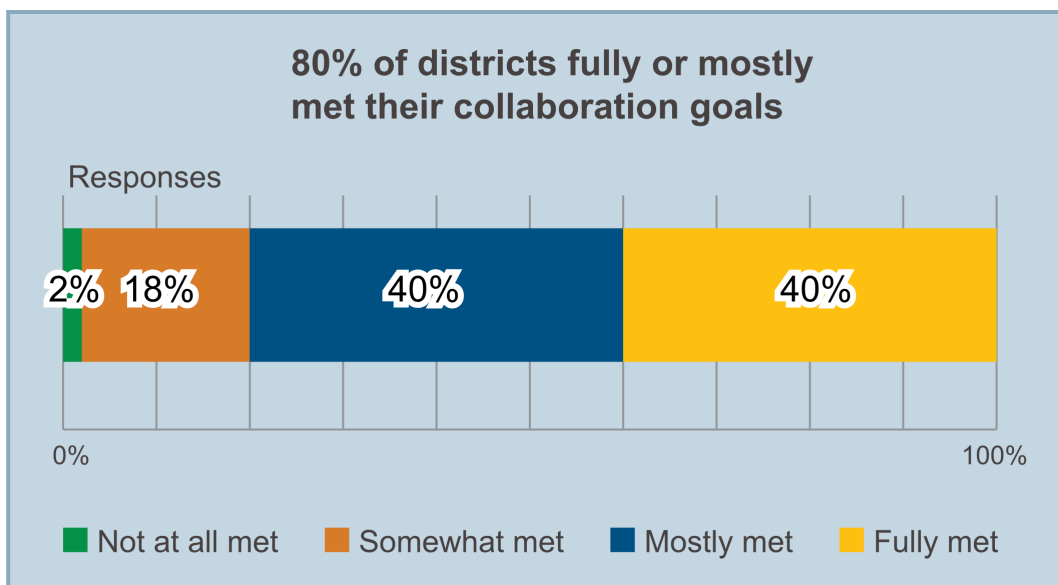
STATE GOAL #2 - COLLABORATION

GOAL

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

SUMMARY

Districts reported they have fully or mostly met their collaboration goals. Collaboration as a common practice includes various strategies such as peer observation, coaching cycles, co-planning and co-teaching, Individual Career Development Plans (ICDP) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as identified in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM).



KEY FINDINGS

Districts reported:

- TLC lead collaboration time was a value to teacher growth and learning as well as student achievement.
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) leaders worked with collaboration teams to focus on key district and building initiatives.
- TLC collaboration efforts focused on individual teacher goals as identified in their Individual Career Development Plan (ICDP).
- Districts adjusted collaboration efforts in the 2020-2021 school year as a result of the pandemic.
- TLC supported collaborative opportunities created greater collegiality and community among teachers.

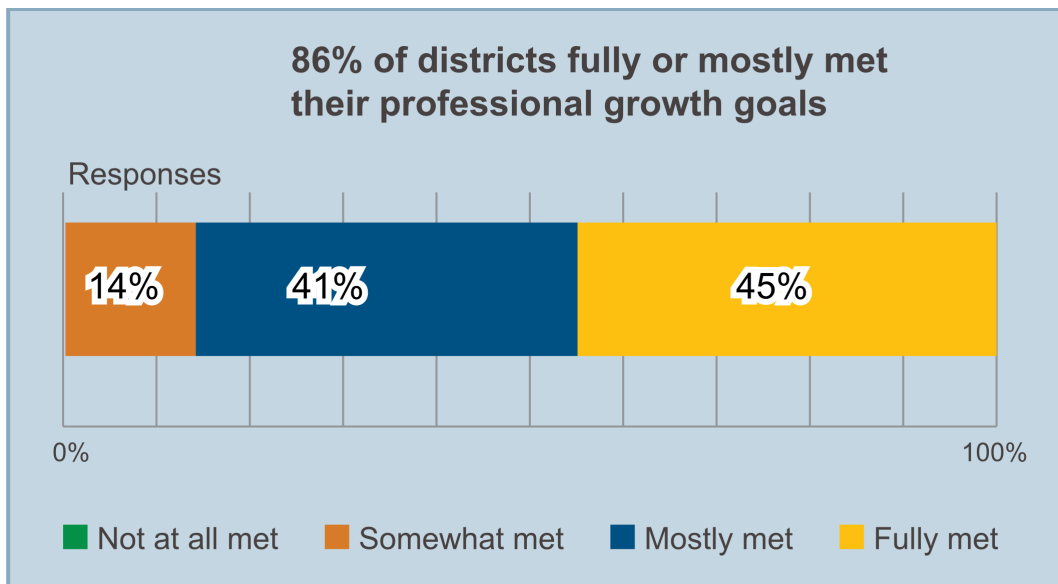
STATE GOAL # 3 - REWARD PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

GOAL

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

SUMMARY

Districts reported they have fully or mostly met their professional growth goals. End of Year reports indicated that TLC offered new pathways for exceptional leaders to share their best practices with colleagues that benefited teachers in the areas of professional development, online learning, social and emotional learning, as well as face-to-face teaching and learning.



KEY FINDINGS

Districts reported:

- TLC teacher leaders supported teacher needs as a result of the many changes in educational delivery, and student needs during the 2020-21 school year.
- TLC teacher leader coaching and supports directly impacted teachers' professional growth across the district.
- Professional development, led by TLC teacher leaders, identified and implemented strategies for meeting data-based needs within the district.
- Professional development, facilitated by teacher leaders, directly supported student growth, school improvement and Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) efforts.

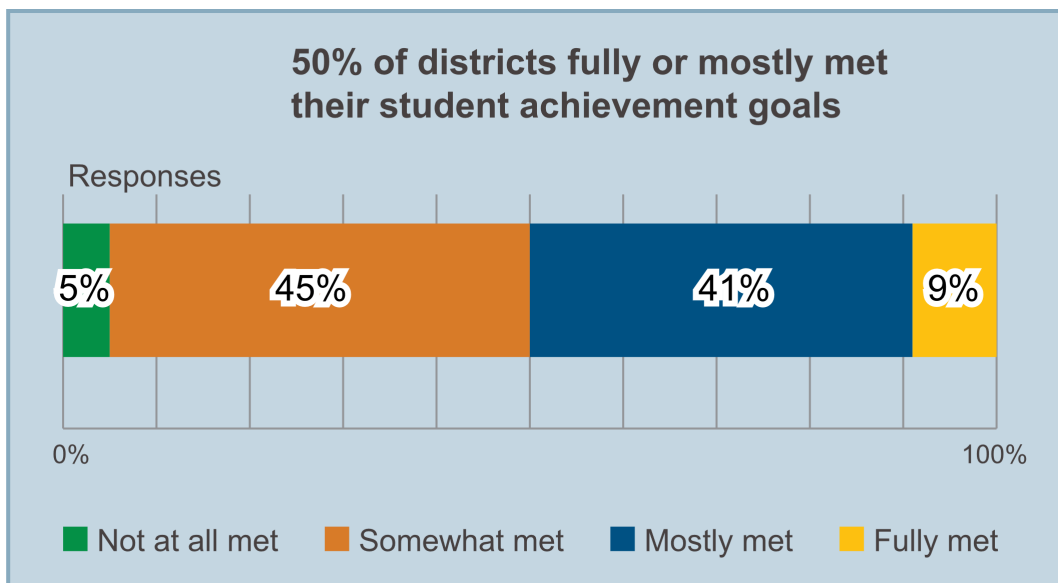
STATE GOAL # 4 - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

GOAL

Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

SUMMARY

Districts reported that they fully or mostly met their student achievement goals. Report results indicated increases in academic performance, as a result of continued teacher growth through professional development. Districts used various data sources to assess the impact of their TLC program on academic performance including internal assessments, universal screeners and teacher observation. They widely reported TLC as one of several factors contributing to their self-reports of student achievement gain, and districts saw a greater tie between the TLC program and their self-reports of student achievement as they refined implementation of the TLC system.



KEY FINDINGS

Districts reported:

- A correlation between the implementation of teacher leadership and student achievement was evident.
- Teacher leaders supported classroom teachers in analyzing student assessment data to inform instructional planning in real time.
- Teacher leaders directed Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) processes as buildings focused on student needs.
- Diverse learner needs were identified and addressed through multiple evolving and established teacher leadership roles.

- The strength of TLC is the responsiveness and timeliness of the support they provide directly to teachers when and where they need it most.

SUMMARY

In the spring of 2020, in response to the pandemic, the Department and its Teacher Leadership Compensation Team responded to unique needs placed on school districts to better serve our TLC leaders. This work continued into the 2020-21 school year, as educational practices and leadership needs evolved in Iowa. This included flexibility in developing new TLC positions that could be implemented immediately to best meet the local needs of students and teachers. Some of these positions were focused on technology, online learning, as well as new teaching strategies that supported remote learning. The results of this report indicate that TLC results in a more robust teaching profession.

FINDINGS

Although results vary across districts, in general, districts reported:

- TLC-based mentor/mentee programs continue to positively impact new-to-the-profession, and new-to-the-district teachers.
- TLC teacher leaders facilitate paths for meaningful professional relationships and learning opportunities between veteran and new educators.
- TLC provides meaningful collaboration between buildings, districts, regional agencies and state-wide agencies.
- TLC leaders facilitate frameworks for teacher collaboration through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), instructional frameworks, reflection, coaching cycles and common language.
- Districts use AEA support for the continued implementation of TLC initiatives, learning opportunities and collaboration at the local, regional and state levels.
- Instructional coaches continue to play significant roles in implementing best practice and reflection strategies with teachers.
- Teacher leaders use student achievement, classroom and curriculum-based data to guide learning opportunities for teachers.
- TLC leaders took on facilitation roles in regards to TLC leadership, as well as building and district professional development.
- Instructional coaches used Individual Career Development Plans to create individual teacher coaching cycles, reflective strategies and professional learning opportunities.
- Professional development, led by TLC leaders, met identified grade-level, building-level and district-level needs.
- Teacher leaders worked with teachers to assess local and state-wide assessments, and created data-based goals and needs.
- TLC supports the formation of student, classroom and grade level intervention strategies and implementation.
- TLC initiatives have built trust between coaches and teachers as they collaborate on student-centered issues based on data.

- TLC leader positions have evolved to meet the needs of classroom and online teachers, while keeping student achievement at the forefront of these educational changes.
- TLC as a whole, continues to adapt and grow within Iowa school districts. This is evidenced by TLC collaboration opportunities in and out of local districts, increased coaching cycles, leadership in PLCs, professional development and the evolution of leadership positions in Iowa schools.
- Building level administrators and district level administrators played an important role in assuring TLC functioned and was implemented with fidelity within their districts.

COMMISSION ON EDUCATOR LEADERSHIP AND COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission for Educator Leadership and Compensation is required to provide recommendations annually to the Director of the Department of Education, the state board of education, the governor and the general assembly. The recommendations of the commission this year include:

- Continue focus on student achievement.
- Use a district-identified instructional framework and aligned professional development.
- Identify and monitor multiple sources, both local and state-wide, of student achievement data in order to evaluate the effectiveness of TLC.
- Evolve teacher leadership roles and responsibilities as student and teacher learning needs change.
- Create TLC plans that support a transparent and inclusive process in the selection of teacher leaders.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders and communicate them to all district stakeholders.
- Provide support and guidance to district administrators to best support the continued work of teacher leadership.
- Explore ways in which districts are able to share experiences with teacher leadership.
- Continue to provide teacher leaders coaching with formal and informal learning opportunities.
- Provide professional development opportunities for district administrators to grow in their roles as TLC advocates.
- Continue collaboration between districts with outside agencies to provide best practices and support.
- Hold regular meetings for district TLC site-based teams to discuss TLC plan changes and updates, staffing, evaluation and funding of their local TLC program for approval.
- Use TLC funds to fully implement local TLC processes.
- Continue to support a leadership structure that helps to facilitate growth. From leadership roles that meet ever changing teacher needs, to new best practices that require teaching new strategies, to coaching cycles based on student data, TLC leaders will continue to support teachers in every facet of the profession. This support will always be rooted in continued student improvement and learning.

- Increase incentives around attracting and retaining teachers including but not limited to tuition grants, stipends for student teachers, and increasing teacher salaries.

ASSURANCES

- The school district will have a minimum salary of \$33,500 for all full-time teachers.
- The selection process for teacher leadership roles will include a selection committee that includes teachers and administrators who shall accept and review applications for assignment or reassignment to a teacher leadership role and shall make recommendations regarding the applications to the superintendent of the school district.
- The district will demonstrate a good-faith effort to attain participation by 25 percent of the teacher workforce in teacher leadership roles beyond the initial and career teacher levels.
- A teacher employed in a school district shall not receive less compensation in that district than the teacher received in the school year preceding implementation of the district's TLC plan.
- The framework or comparable system shall be applicable to teachers in every attendance center operated by the school district.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Deb Barry

Teacher, Linn-Mar, Marion

Lisa Bartusek

Iowa Association of School Boards, Des Moines

Mike Beranek

President, Iowa State Education Association, Des Moines

Liz Brennan

Iowa Association of School Boards, West Des Moines

Janelle Brouwer

Superintendent, Marion

Mary Jane Cobb

Iowa State Education Association, Des Moines

Kevin Ericson,

Teacher, Nevada

Paul Gausman

Superintendent, Sioux City

Jim Green

Iowa Association of School Boards, Cedar Rapids

Roark Horn

School Administrators of Iowa, Clive

Tara Irwin

Parent, Dewitt

Jeff Orvis,

Teacher, Waverly-Shell Rock, Waverly

Diane Pratt

Teacher, Fort Dodge

Lisa Pulis

Teacher, South Hamilton, Jewell

Zipporah Smith

Teacher, Des Moines

Matt Townsley

University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls

Doug Wheeler

Superintendent, College Community, Cedar Rapids

Cindy Yelick,

AEA Chief, Great Prairie, Ottumwa

Ann Lebo

Director, Iowa Department of Education, Des Moines (non-voting)

Brad Niebling

Iowa Department of Education, Designee, Des Moines (non-voting)