

Legislative Report Teacher Leadership and Compensation



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State of Iowa
Department of Education
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INTRODUCTION

2019-2020 TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND COMPENSATION END-OF-YEAR REPORT

Iowa leads the nation with its innovative Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system, the most comprehensive initiative of its kind in the United States. TLC 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.

Through the system, Teacher Leaders take on additional responsibilities, including 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 leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

The 2019-2020 school year marked the fourth year that every district in the state has implemented TLC. The state allocated \$162,738,249 in fiscal year 2020 (FY 20) 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 (Department). Districts' original plans and approved changes can be found on the TLC page of the Department website. Updated plans may be found at <https://reports.educateiowa.gov/EOYPublic/Home/Plan>.

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 2019-2020 school year. Each district's end-of-year report is available at <https://reports.educateiowa.gov/EOYPublic>.

The Department and its TLC team responded to COVID-19's impact on school districts, in spring 2020 to better serve our TLC leaders. This included flexibility in developing new TLC positions that could immediately be implemented to best meet the local needs of students and teachers. Some of these positions were focused on technology, online learning and new teaching strategies to support remote learning. This report contains summary data from the district's TLC end-of-year reports as well as interview data (teacher and Teacher Leader quotes) collected by the Region 9 Comprehensive Center network.

The Region 9 Comprehensive Center, operated by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) through a U.S. Department of Education grant since October 2019, provided consulting services

at no cost to state education agencies and other education stakeholders in Iowa and Illinois. The Center conducted a needs assessment for Iowa's TLC program in 2019-2020.

The needs assessment included 48 interviews and focus groups in 14 school districts across Iowa that had some of the highest year-over-year growth scores on the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), which is an early literacy screening assessment. Through these interviews and focus groups, the Region 9 Comprehensive Center identified several themes and recommendations that other schools and districts across Iowa may find informative for their own TLC implementation. The full needs assessment report is available at the link below.

[Link to Region 9 Needs Assessment](#)

[Link to full Statewide End-of-Year 2019-2020](#)

STATE GOAL #1 – ATTRACT AND RETAIN

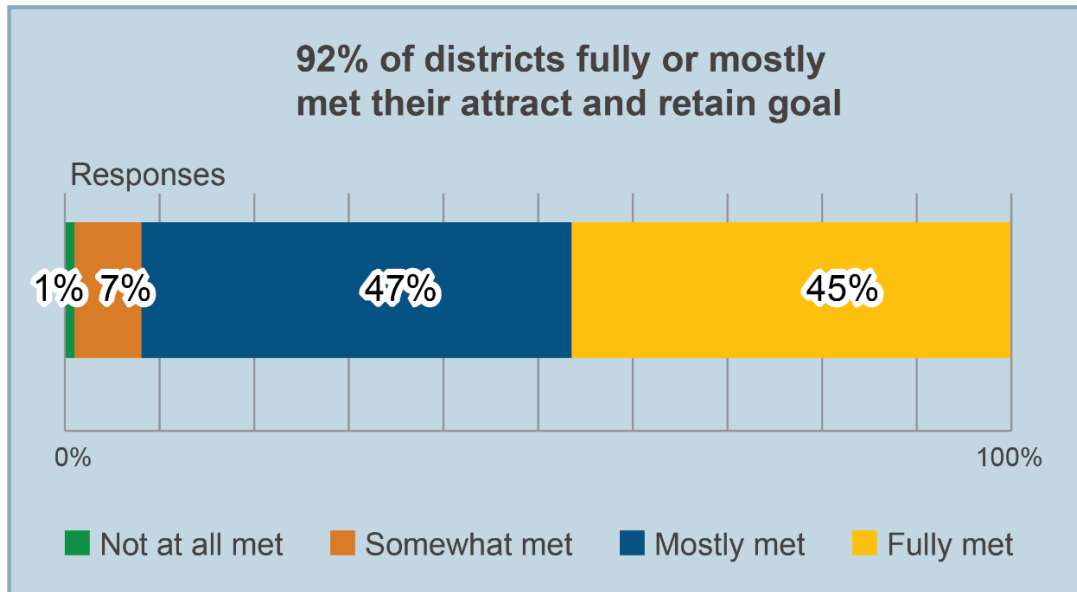
GOALS

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 reporting solid growth in attracting and retaining teachers. Improved mentoring programs provide support to new and career teachers.



For the 2019-2020 school year, 92 percent of school districts reported fully or mostly met their local “attract and retain” teachers growth goal. That is up three percentage points from the 89 percent of districts that fully or mostly met their “attract and retain” goal in 2018-2019.

KEY FINDINGS

- Districts cited TLC Teacher Leaders as being a key resource, benefit and support for new teachers.
- Districts noted that TLC Teacher Leaders created a path for building meaningful relationships between new and experienced teachers.
- Districts worked in collaboration with their area education agency (AEA) to train TLC mentors in support of new to the profession teachers in their district.
- Most districts identified increased rates of teacher retention that they attributed to the work of TLC Teacher Leaders.

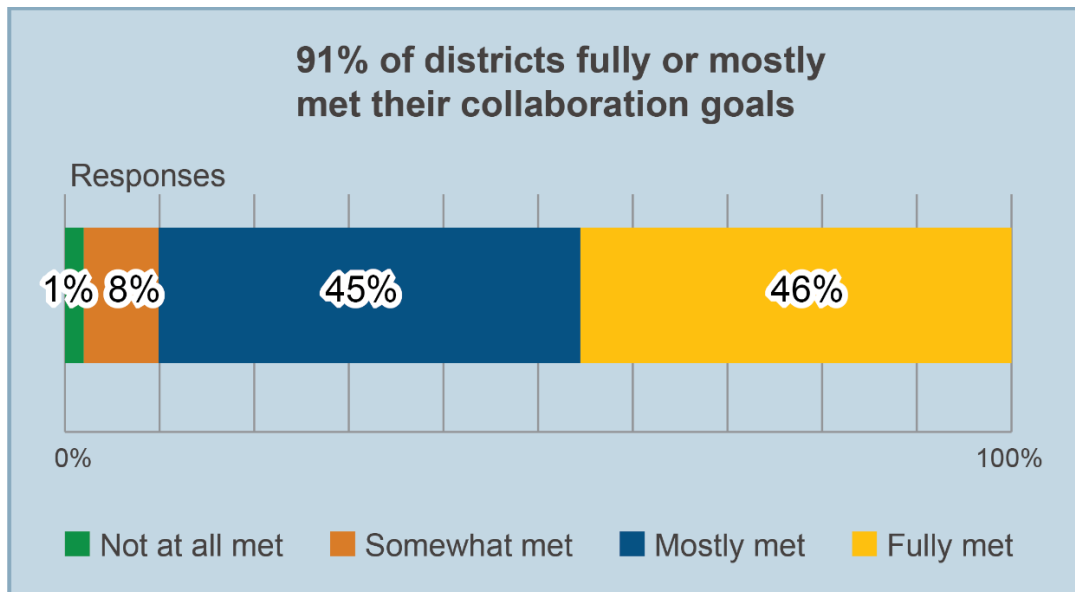
STATE GOAL # 2 - COLLABORATION

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 various strategies 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 (IPDM).



For the 2019-2020 school year, 91 percent of districts reported fully or mostly met their local collaboration goal, an increase of four percentage points compared to 87 percent in 2018-2019.

KEY FINDINGS

- TLC Teacher Leaders continue to collaborate with and/or serve as leads for PLCs in their district.
- Most districts reported on the crucial role of instructional coaches and their use of coaching cycles and reflective practices.
- TLC Teacher Leaders collaborate with teachers in a variety of ways to support student achievement efforts.
- Many districts addressed the importance of a “common language” as a centerpiece for powerful collaboration. This “common language” is often defined through an instructional framework.

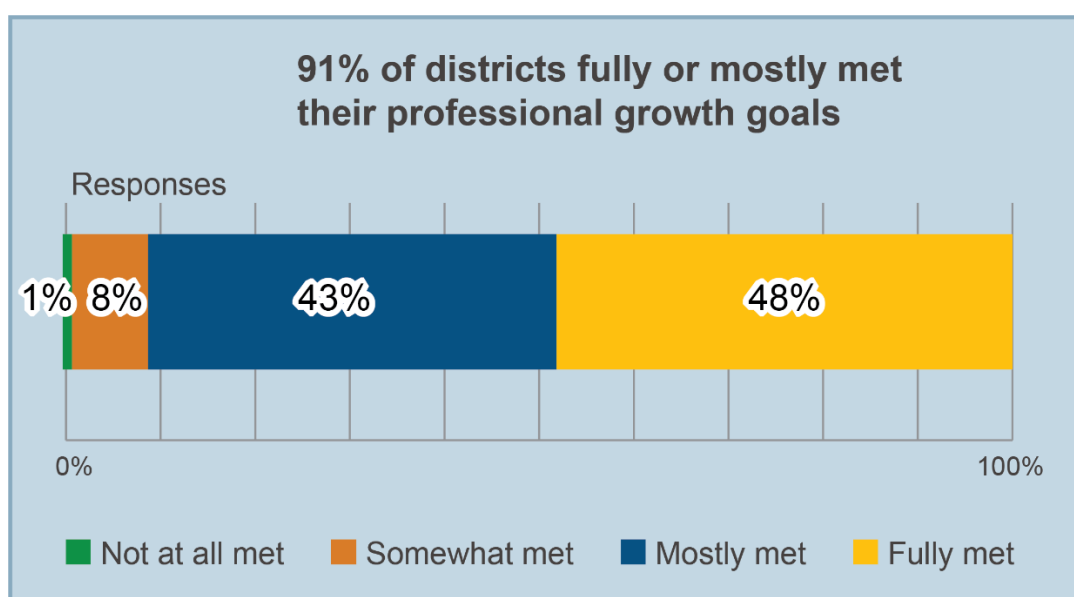
GOAL # 3 – REWARD PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

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 offers 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 career teachers, are benefiting from the new leadership roles.



For the 2019-2020 school year, 91 percent of districts reported that they fully or mostly met their professional growth goal. That compares to 86 percent in 2018-2019, an increase of five percentage points.

KEY FINDINGS

- Many districts reported that TLC Teacher Leaders support the professional growth of teachers across the district.
- Many districts reported that TLC Teacher Leaders coached teachers through coaching cycles and reflective practices.
- Many districts based their professional development efforts, supported by TLC Teacher Leaders, on teacher needs identified through their Individual Career Development Plans (ICDP).
- Professional development, led by TLC Teacher Leaders, supported specific needs identified by the district.

GOAL # 4 – STUDENT ACHEIVEMENT

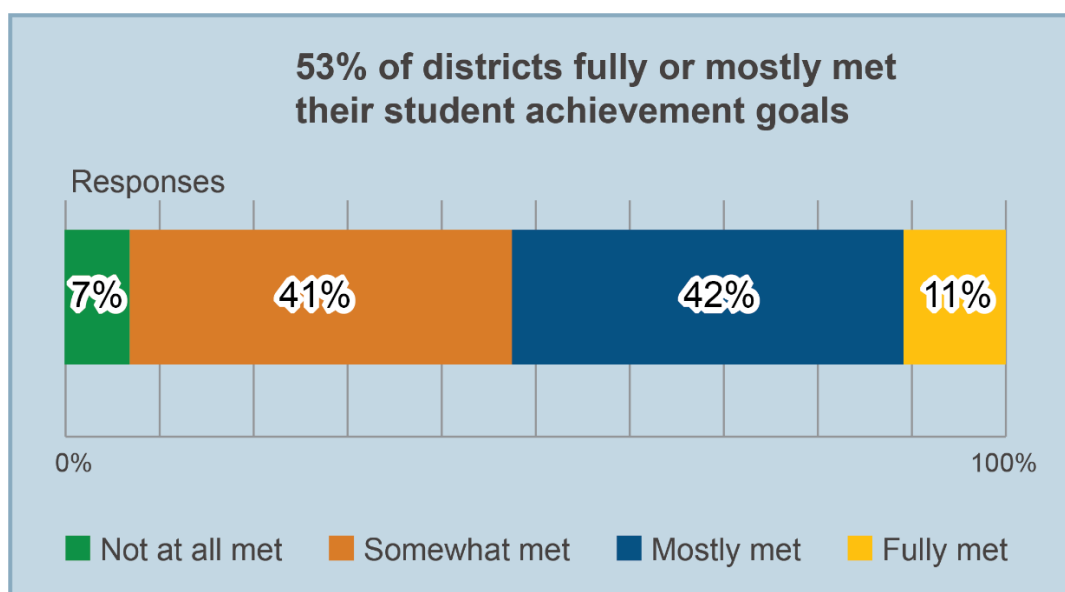
GOAL

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 positive indicators. 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 student achievement gain and districts saw a greater tie between the TLC program and student achievement as they refined implementation of the TLC system.

Due to COVID-19, districts did not have some data sources, like the annual state assessment Iowa State Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and FastBridge, when they completed their end-of-year reports. That negatively impacted the percentage of districts fully or mostly meeting their student achievement goal-because some districts reported “not at all met “or “somewhat met” due to the missing data.



In the 2019-2020 school year, 53 percent of districts reported that they fully or mostly met their student achievement goal. This decreased from 58 percent in the 2018-2019 school year, and was impacted by missing spring student achievement data that was unavailable due to the pandemic.

KEY FINDINGS

- TLC Teacher Leaders supported classroom teachers in analyzing student assessment data to inform instructional planning.
- Districts reported they see a correlation between implementation of teacher leadership and student achievement.

- Multiple districts shared that TLC Teacher Leaders lead the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process as buildings focus on student need.
- Many districts have noted support that TLC Teacher Leaders provide in the formation of student, classroom and grade-level intervention.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Teacher leadership continues to be a key lever for the recruitment, retention, and development of teachers 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 student learning. 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:

- New-to-the-profession teachers continue to show success in the work they are doing with TLC leaders and mentors. They cite meaningful connections to the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria (ITSC), building collaborative relationships and increasing confidence as they begin their careers as classroom teachers.
- Districts continue to utilize collaboration among existing structures to support student achievement through improved teaching strategies. These connections are noted between TLC and PLCs, reflective coaching practices and cycles, use of instructional frameworks to support common languages, aligned professional development to building needs and MTSS implementation.
- The roles of teacher leaders continue to evolve as their capacity to deliver meaningful professional development increases. Capacity has increased as Teacher Leaders' access to research-based professional development has increased.
- Student achievement data collection continues to be a foundational theme for district TLC programs. Local end-of-year reports noted student learning indicators, student success as defined by Iowa Academic Standards, student cognitive engagement, as well as personalized learning systems for individual students. This work was done without the added data that would have been collected from spring FastBridge testing, ISASP, MAP testing, as well as other district assessments that were not completed due to COVID-19.
- Teacher Leadership roles and responsibilities came under unanticipated demands due to COVID-19 related needs. Teacher Leaders and TLC teams adapted, designed and implemented supports that made transitions possible, while keeping student learning at the forefront of education.
- TLC continues to evolve and grow within Iowa school districts. This is evidenced by the multiple new leadership roles in the various TLC programs, the increased number of teachers participating in coaching cycles and the implementation and involvement in professional development through instructional frameworks.

SUMMARY

Iowa is proud to have the most extensive teacher leadership system in the nation. The 2019-2020 school year marked the fourth school year all districts have implemented TLC. Launched in 2014-2015 with 39 districts and phased in over three years, TLC has transformed education with an annual investment now over \$160 million. The main focus continues to be improved student learning. Iowa's best teachers are empowered to lead that effort along-side school administrators. Enhanced career opportunities have elevated the teaching profession.

For the 2019-2020 school year, 92 percent of districts reported that they fully or mostly met their local "attract and retain" teacher goals. That is up three percentage points from 2018-2019. Ninety-one percent of districts reported that they fully or mostly met their local "collaboration" goals, an increase of four percentage points. Student achievement was harder to measure because the pandemic interrupted assessments. Having noted the lack of assessment data, the outstanding work that districts are doing across the state is still evident, especially in this challenging school year.

The Region 9 Comprehensive Center external evaluation of TLC's impact found much to praise and also suggested districts consider more deliberate steps including targeted professional development on data use.

All indications are that TLC continues to be influential in Iowa schools. The continued collaboration between the Department, districts, AEAs, and other agencies assures best practice and continued growth among Teacher Leaders and the TLC system as a whole.