



NEW RESOURCES

Transform Teacher Leadership

Across the education field, there is unusual consensus that strong teacher leadership is central to improving our schools, particularly as teachers and students strive to meet higher academic expectations. While a growing number of districts are creating teacher leader roles, unfortunately few are providing any kind of specialized training.

Assigning teachers to leadership roles without quality training does a double disservice: It takes teaching time away from the educators best prepared to accelerate student learning, and then fails to equip them with the skills they need to lead colleagues to similar success. So what can be done to ensure that teacher leaders have the skills and expertise they need to meaningfully contribute to schoolwide improvement?

A new report from New Leaders—*Untapped: Transforming Teacher Leadership to Help Students Succeed*—begins to answer that question. It describes and shares promising early findings from its Emerging Leaders Program, a job-embedded coaching and training program that develops teachers into forceful instructional leaders.

Program outcomes indicate that almost three-quarters of participants were able to

boost student learning in the classrooms they supervised during their training year.

A one-page companion resource, *Untapped: What Principals Can Do to Transform Teacher Leadership*, describes six steps principals can take right away to foster authentic and effective teacher leadership at their schools.

MYTWOCENTS

What new ideas are you excited to implement at your school this year?



Michelle Kauffman (@principalme99): *Leader in Me year two: All students will have data notebooks, set goals, and be responsible leaders.*



David Troy: *Implementing many of the ideals from Cultural Competency training to meet more of our students' needs and developing more "runners" after reading Ron Clark's book, Move Your Bus.*

American public say there is “too much emphasis on testing” and 41 percent say parents should be able to opt their children out of standardized testing.

—2015 PDK/GALLUP POLL OF THE PUBLIC’S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. Prioritize shared leadership as a critical strategy for school improvement. For example, set a time-bound goal to collaborate in a key area of responsibility, such as coaching or operations.

2. Inventory current and future leadership needs at the school. For example, undertake a school needs assessment or have a structured conversation with a supervisor to identify gaps in leadership capacity.

3. Assess individual potential to share leadership responsibilities. For example, look for evidence that individual staff members can set and exemplify high expectations for all, earn respect and trust among col-

leagues, and guide colleagues to delivering better instruction.

4. Define potential shared leadership responsibilities based on school needs and staff strengths and expertise.

5. Support targeted opportunities for staff to develop key leadership skills. For example, develop incremental, job-embedded opportunities for aspiring teacher leaders to road-test their skills.

6. Set specific impact goals for teacher leaders. Communicate your expectations for teachers who take on leadership responsibilities and offer regular feedback to help them meet those expectations.

SPOTLIGHT ON BEST PRACTICES

Hands-on Leadership

End each day by reflecting and acknowledging a staff member or student through a positive handwritten note. This helps you end the day focusing on the positive, and not on the parent phone calls or discipline referrals that have consumed the day. It also improves morale with students and staff members as it helps them realize that at any moment they may be “caught doing good” for all things, small or large.

—*Andrea Pitonyak-Delcambre, assistant principal at South Thibodaux Elementary School in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and a 2014-2015 National Outstanding Assistant Principal*

If you expect your staff and even your students to do their jobs on a day-to-day basis, you have to be willing to do those jobs yourself. Whether it is making copies, teaching lessons, mopping the cafeteria, or getting down on the floor to help a student with math manipulatives, it is important to do the jobs you assign. This will help build strong relationships and you will learn more about the important work students and staff members do every day.

—*Toni Beckler, assistant principal at Woodland Elementary School in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, and a 2012-2013 National Outstanding Assistant Principal*



Great Projects to Boost Creativity



Building a movement, focusing on problem-solving, and engaging parents are just a few of the topics that this year’s Champion Creatively Alive Children supplement addresses. Sponsored by Crayola (and accompanying this issue of *Principal*), the issue features the latest research on art-integration and highlights innovative project ideas. Here are some of the grant-winning ideas on how to infuse art into your curriculum:

1. Arrange for students to serve as docents in local museums.
2. Use a Design Thinking model to have students solve real-world problems.
3. Create a Maker Space where students bring an artistic approach to the engineering design process.
4. Make a commitment to family engagement by transforming your school into a museum-like community center.
5. Frame professional development for teachers on using visual journaling to identify individual learning styles and help students represent their thinking.
6. Encourage parents to be powerful advocates for integrating the arts.



Melanie Dopson (@meldopson): I’m flipping my staff meetings and adding an EdCamp model. Teachers will have a choice—old or new model.



Mark Anthony Johnson (@mc_bossy): I will be implementing weekly @mission_monday ideas from this book to build school climate: *It Happens In the Hallway*.