

Abstract

The Mission of the Edgewood-Colesburg Community School District is to *assist and ensure that each student achieves his or her level of educational excellence*. We know for students to succeed, our teachers must also reach their level of educational excellence. The teacher leadership program could make this a possibility. With a system of supports and ongoing capacity building, all teachers have the capacity to be leaders. The best way to improve student achievement is to focus on student learning through improvement in instruction, assessment, curriculum, climate and technology. To accomplish this mission, we implemented the following practices:

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS/C4K/RTI)
- Iowa Core
- Technology
- Relationships (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, Safe and Supportive Schools)
- Math (Cognitively Guided Instruction K-6)
- Standards-Based Grading (SBG)

Our Teacher Leadership and Compensation Plan developed by parents, board members, teachers, and administrators expands our current system to provide additional levels of supports for learners in our district. When all members of our organization accept responsibility for the learning of all students, their unrelenting focus on student improvement brings to life their shared vision and purpose. This compelling vision and purpose are the reasons for sharing this leadership throughout our district and developing frameworks that support that work. The TLC committee has developed the following vision:

- Improve student achievement by strengthening CORE instruction.
- Attract highly qualified new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and offering short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
- Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- Maintain quality teachers in providing instruction in the classroom.
- 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 teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.

Through numerous meetings and continuous research and discussion, the following plan was developed to reach our vision.

- A **rigorous selection** process, **training** for teacher leaders through Keystone AEA, and other providers, and **on-going support**. \$10,000 is budgeted for the training of teacher leaders.
- Two **Instructional Coaches** will assist in leading school improvement. The two teachers will be relieved of 50% of their classroom assignment to accomplish this task. An additional staff member will be hired to cover teaching assignment. The plan is to have one secondary and one elementary instructional coach.
- Eight **Lead Teachers** will lead PLCs curriculum and strategy design and be working with teachers to improve teaching and learning.
- **Mentor Teachers** will be supporting, observing, coaching and modeling to support mentees entry into the profession. \$55,603.48 is budgeted for salary supplements for teachers in leadership roles.
- Funds will also be used to bring everyone up to \$33,500, release time for modeling, collaboration, and peer reviews. \$13,223.25 is needed to bring staff up to the base salary. \$51,024.75 is allotted for additional staff to support teachers in leadership when not providing direct instruction.

Our district has a strong belief that all teachers are leaders, which is evident in our weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) work. The teachers value the collaboration time in the PLCs, therefore we made the PLC work a priority. Assistance would be provided by teacher leader roles, which would improve the PLC process and the quality of instruction. This would also lead to more effective implementations of district initiatives.

For a successful plan, **effective** teacher leaders (instructional coaches, lead teachers and mentor teachers) must be a top priority. A selection committee made up of three teachers and three administrators will accept and review applications for

assignment/reassignment to a teacher leadership role and make recommendations to the superintendent. Selection is based on teacher effectiveness as compared to the selected criteria. The selection process will consist of observations, interviews, and answers on the application itself.

The evaluation of the plan will be ongoing and provide information that is sound, meaningful, and sufficiently reliable in making thoughtful and responsible decisions about the processes and effects. The evaluation processes will also evolve with the program.

98% of the teachers look forward to the additional collaborative time to improve instruction. 51% are willing to fulfill the planner/presenter responsibilities. 24% are interested in the instructional coaching positions.

Implementation of the Teacher Leadership Compensation System has the opportunity to advance education in the district like we have never seen before. Empowering teachers to serve as leaders can truly improve student achievement. If we have professional development that is aligned, differentiated, and of appropriate intensity, then instruction provided to each student will be engaging, meaningful, personalized, rigorous, and cognitively demanding. The goal of the proposed teacher leadership model is to improve the quality and responsiveness of professional learning opportunities for staff and improve instruction through the implementation of various district strategies and initiatives. If we establish distributed leadership opportunities that provide quality professional development to support personalized learning, reward professional growth and effective teaching, then we will attract and retain quality teachers, improve student learning, and make Ed-Co Schools a learning environment in which everyone wants to join. We are committed to providing a personalized learning system at Ed-Co.

Part 2

Vision for a High-Quality Plan

The Mission of the Edgewood-Colesburg Community School District is to assist and ensure that each student achieves his or her level of educational excellence. We know for students to succeed, our teachers must also reach their level of educational excellence. The teacher leadership program will make this a possibility. With a system of supports and ongoing capacity building, all teachers have the ability to be leaders. The best way to improve student achievement is to focus on student learning through improvement in instruction, assessment, curriculum, climate, and technology.

Our vision directly aligns with the state's vision for the teacher leadership program. The state wants to transform the teaching profession with greater support and more career opportunities for teachers. This will then create a system with quality implementation where student learning will increase, student outcomes will improve, and students will be prepared to be lifelong learners.

In addition to a clear vision for the program, we also have clear goals that correlate with that of the state. Our number one goal is improving student learning by strengthening our instruction. Ed-Co has identified data teams that focus on reading comprehension and math. Each group studies data to determine what interventions or enrichment opportunities students should receive. The students are placed in small groups and served during identified intervention time at the elementary and secondary. These groups are data driven and targeted on specific skills from the Iowa Core.

Vision: Through the retention of effective teachers, the ability to attract able/promising new teachers, promoting collaboration among teachers, and rewarding professional growth and effective teaching, we will improve student achievement and strengthen CORE instruction in our district.

Our district has adopted a teacher leadership system that addresses the vision established by community members, teachers, district administrators, and endorsed by the school board. We feel this system is crucial as experienced veteran teachers begin to leave the workforce. The need for more collaboration and a strong teacher leadership system will insure their wealth of knowledge is not lost.

District Goal: If we provide a well supported system of teacher leadership, offer competitive salaries and deliver lead teachers professional development, then the CORE will be fully implemented, teachers' instruction will improve, and student achievement will be met. By meeting this goal the following items will occur, which in turn will benefit the district.

Initial Results:

1. Attract highly qualified new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and providing short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
2. Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities. Maintain quality teachers in providing instruction in the classroom.
3. Promote collaboration through the work of professional learning communities and district initiatives.
4. Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.

Long Term Results:

1. Increase student achievement in reading through the improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate, and technology.
2. Increase student achievement in math through the improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate, and technology.
3. Increase student achievement in science through the improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate, and technology.

By July 2015, our district will provide competitive salaries to all identified teacher leaders. Implementation measured by documentation that salaries were paid at the intended level by the date established in the goal.

By August 2015, our district will install new leadership roles and systems of support for teacher leaders using Model #3. Review of artifacts will document that the TLC roles are in place: role descriptions, job descriptions, advertisement for new positions, hiring data, training data, teacher assignment rosters.

Throughout the 2015-16 school year, lead teachers and instructional coaches will facilitate and lead effective professional learning opportunities in our district following the building level PD plan and the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM). Implementation measured by teacher leader job descriptions, evidence that quality professional development was accessed by all teachers. Artifacts: minutes from PD planning meetings and agendas from professional learning opportunities.

Throughout the 2015-16 school year, mentor teachers will promote the growth and development of the beginning teachers to improve student learning. Results measured by mentor/mentee logs and student achievement data.

Throughout the 2015-16 school year through participation in staff development, teachers will gain, refine, and apply skills in the classroom to improve student learning. Measured by PLC logs/minutes and student achievement data.

Through focused researched-based materials (Jolly Phonics) and the implementation of these skills into teaching practices, we have seen progress in our early childhood literacy skills. These improvements can be seen through district Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) assessment data. Student achievement improvements like this give proof that through focused professional development, quality staff, and collaboration; change can be made district-wide.

Part 3

Edgewood-Colesburg Initiatives:

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLC)** - Lead Teachers will provide overall guidance to PLCs in integrating new instructional theories and strategies.
- **Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS/C4K/RTI)** Instructional coaches will lead implementation strategies to improve our MTSS instruction time and assist lead teachers in modeling instructional strategies.
- **Iowa Core** - All teacher leaders will help to align all practices with the Iowa Core and ensure proper professional development to implement those efforts.
- **Technology** - Lead teachers will model new and best classroom practices, monitoring, and instructing other teachers in those practices.

- **Relationships (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, Safe and Supportive Schools)** - Lead teachers will review climate data with PLCs, target areas in need of improvement, and assist in the implementation of strategies to improve targeted areas.
- **Standards-Based Grading (SBG)** - Lead teachers will research, lead discussions with staff, and develop a plan for implementation of SBG at the 7-12 grades.

With each of these initiatives, we have evaluation procedures in place that closely align with the Iowa Professional Development Model. We isolate a need in our building, enact a research-based strategy, analyze our results after implementation, then adjust and try again. In every case, the district uses a team to analyze the results. A variety of teams from the Building Leadership Team, IS3 team (for culture), or the Math/Literacy Team at the elementary make these decisions. The data ranges from surveys and electronic data walls to meeting agendas/minutes and observations.

With our current method of professional development, we are getting “pockets of excellence”. By implementing a teacher leader, the success seen in one group of students can more readily be transferred to other students with the help of our teacher leaders who have a bird’s eye view of the district as a whole. The teacher leaders will visit classrooms, model with teachers, analyze data, plan district professional development with administration, and help staff on individual classroom matters.

Our district has a strong belief that all teachers are leaders, which is evident in our weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) work. The teachers value the collaboration time in the PLCs, therefore we made the PLC work a priority. Additional improvement and assistance would be provided by additional teacher leader roles: instructional coaches, lead teachers focused on implementation of PD topics, and mentor teachers.

The basic role of an **instructional coach** is to increase the instructional capacity of teachers. An instructional coach is one who supports others in building their teaching skills, assists others in applying new knowledge, and provides ongoing professional development. **Lead teachers** would assist in the delivery, training, implementation, and monitoring of the instructional elements of the professional development structures (embedded professional development and research based professional practices). They will support the instructional leadership of the district regarding all professional development activities in regards to curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology. **Mentor teachers** promote the growth and development of the beginning teacher to improve student learning. This is accomplished through providing support in guiding new teachers to enhance their planning, instruction, and content knowledge. Mentors help orient new teachers to the school community and teaching in general. Mentors also serve as collegial supports.

Our district’s belief is that quality professional development supports “best teaching practices,” which translates into improved student learning in all areas. In order to deliver quality professional development to our staff, we feel collaboration in the planning and delivery between our Instructional Coaches, Lead Teachers, and Teacher Mentors is not only beneficial, but crucial. Professional development needs are created under the umbrella of district goals and leadership (as per the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, C-Plan).

Part 4 – Kept from 1st application with a score of 10

Past Requirements for Mentoring in our district

Currently, the school mentoring plan in the district isn’t as structured as needed. It does not have timelines in place, nor the accountability built in each quarter for the mentee/mentor’s expectations. The district has been fortunate to utilize highly effective people in our buildings, but needs a more valid and reliable system. The grant provides funding for time the mentor and mentee will collaborate, as well as compensates staff who step up to take on leadership responsibilities.

Mentoring Philosophy

Teaching is one of the few professions where those in entry-level positions have the same workload, must meet the same standards, and have very near to the same expectations as the veterans. Many times this

happens with no more training than is received from their undergraduate work. This may be one reason that so many teachers are leaving the field. According to researchers, almost one-third of teachers leave the profession within the first three years and stress may be to blame for so many opting out of the profession so early. In order to try and stop some of this hemorrhaging, we need to have more supports in place for novice teachers.

A formal induction and mentoring program improves not only the practices of novice teachers but also the practices of the mentors. According to a research study on the mentoring programs, novice teachers felt more supported and were more reflective on their teaching practices. On the flip side, the mentors, through coaching the novice teachers, also became more reflective on their own practices and made necessary changes to their teaching techniques.

NEW Requirements for Mentoring

The district will inform eligible staff of the mentor vacancies. Within one week, interested persons should submit a letter of application to the principal. The building administrator will place (whenever possible) beginning teachers with mentors who serve in the same building. A mentor shall have no more than one beginning teacher assigned to him/her at a time, unless there are no other alternatives. The district has the right to reject any or all applications.

Teachers may go through an application and interview process with the building administrator. Those teachers considered shall have demonstrated the following:

- A minimum of four years of exemplary classroom teaching
- Evidence of commitment to students' academic success
- A commitment to teaching excellence
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- The ability to work with adults
- Effective coaching skills and scheduling flexibility
- A positive role model
- Practices the Iowa Teaching Standards

Timeline for Duties: Year 1

Summer:

- Make initial contact with mentee.
- Be available (through email or phone) to answer any questions they may have before arriving.

Quarter 1:

- All mentors, mentees, and administration will meet for one full day prior to the first contract day.
- Be with mentee during all staff meetings and debrief after each.
- Help prepare them for the first week with students.
- During the first two weeks of school, the mentor will have daily, informal contact with the mentee.
- One formal meeting will take place each week lasting 45-60 minutes each (before/after school, or during common prep). Administration will work with both teachers to find time during contract hours.
- Mentor and mentee must attend a school board meeting together.
- Mentor will observe mentee followed by a post-observation meeting using template provided by district.

- Mentee will observe mentor followed by a post-observation meeting. Coverage for these observations will be provided by the administration.
- Mentor and mentee must keep logs to document contact during the year.

Quarter 2:

- Repeat requirements (formal meeting, observations, post-observation meetings, logs)

Quarter 3:

- Repeat requirements (formal meeting, observations, post-observation meetings, logs)
- Guide mentee on development of professional teaching portfolio.

Quarter 4:

- Repeat requirements (formal meeting, observations, post-observation meetings, logs)
- Continue mentee's work on professional teaching portfolio.
- Assist in end of year wrap-up including inventory and requisition forms.
- At the end of the first year, then again at the end of the second, the mentor and mentee will meet with the building principal to discuss the merits of the mentor program, as well as recommended changes.

Year 2: Repeat requirements (formal meeting, observations, post-observation meetings, logs). Additional duties include the completion of the professional teaching portfolio in March.

If additional years of mentoring are needed for a new teacher, the district would extend the mentoring requirement in house to ensure the proper support. Funding would offset the cost of a mentor needed for a third year teacher and beyond. The TLC funding would also help compensate teachers who plan and lead full day trainings to staff. Any subs brought into the building to cover for teachers who are planning PD, mentoring or following through on Lead Teacher requirements will also be covered with the TLC funds.

Part 5

Our district has a strong belief that all teachers have the capacity to be leaders with a system of supports and ongoing capacity building, which is evident in our weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) work. The teachers value the collaboration time in the PLCs, therefore we have made the PLC work a priority. After conducting extensive outreach with various stakeholders, evaluating the needs of the district, and studying leadership systems throughout the country, we determined three teacher leadership roles would enhance our current process: **instructional coaches, lead teachers, and mentor teachers.**

Our current teaching contract has eight days that are devoted to improving instruction and student achievement through PLC participation. Along with the additional time for PLC collaboration, our staff also felt there was room for additional improvement and assistance could be provided by additional teacher leader roles: instructional coaches, lead teachers, and mentor teachers. The teachers look forward to the additional collaborative time to improve instruction. 98% indicate a positive benefit to collaboration time. 51% are willing to fulfill the lead teacher roles. 24% are interested in the instructional coaching positions.

TITLE: Instructional Coach

(2 total: 1 at elementary; 1 at secondary. Released from teaching assignment 50% of day) Each coach will receive \$6,440 for 10 additional days and time above the usual contracted time.

SUMMARY OF JOB DESCRIPTION: The basic role of an instructional coach is to increase the instructional capacity of teachers. An instructional coach is one who supports others in building their teaching skills, assists others in applying new knowledge, and provides ongoing professional development.

ESSENTIAL JOB ELEMENTS:

1. Helps colleagues by sharing instructional and professional resources, i.e., web sites, instructional materials, readings, articles, books, lesson or unit plans, assessment tools, etc.
2. Helps colleagues select and implement effective teaching strategies and studies how students respond.
3. Provides ideas for differentiating instruction and planning lessons in partnership with fellow teachers.
4. Works inside classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas, demonstrates lessons, engages in co-teaching, observing, and giving feedback (or having a coaching dialog).
5. Supports ongoing collective learning so teachers focus on practices that directly improve student learning.
6. Leads teams to collect and analyze data to make decisions related to professional growth and school-wide action research.
7. Assists with selecting PD content (best instructional practices) and seeks and shares knowledge about theories, research, and effective practices in adult learning.
8. Works collaboratively with Teacher Quality Committee and other committees to advance a collective responsibility for building capacity of teachers and articulating the link between professional learning and student learning.
9. Helps administrators and teachers to keep the focus on teaching, learning, and continuous improvement.
10. Designs and delivers training (Theory, Demonstrations, Practice, and Collaboration).
11. Helps structure opportunities for teachers to practice newly learned skills with peers in the workshop setting and in classrooms.
12. Leads conversations to engage peers in analyzing and using data to strengthen instruction.
13. Implements appropriate learning designs and invites teachers into their classrooms to observe, co-teach, collect data, etc.
14. Shares knowledge about the selection of appropriate learning strategies and how to implement these in the classroom.
15. Models how to plan instruction on the basis of formative and summative data and to continuously assess progress.
16. Meets regularly with other instructional coaches and attends AEA trainings to expand knowledge.
17. Collaborates with administration on needs of the district.

TITLE: Lead Teacher

Each Lead Teacher will receive **\$3,200** for 10 additional days.

SUMMARY OF JOB DESCRIPTION: To assist in the delivery, training, implementation and monitoring of the instructional elements of the professional development structures (embedded professional development and research based professional practices). Support the instructional leadership of the district regarding all professional development activities in regards to curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology.

1. Facilitate and plan professional development activities.
2. Assist with using data to determine needs/direction of district.
3. Assist in the long-range planning (organizing, developing, communicating, updating, conducting) of professional development activities.
4. Designs and delivers training (Theory, Demonstrations, Practice, and Collaboration)
5. Helps structure opportunities for teachers to practice newly learned skills with peers in the workshop setting and in classrooms.
6. Participate in the development and enhancement of a district-wide culture that promotes professional growth and student learning.

TITLE: Mentor Teacher

Each Mentor Teacher will receive **\$1,500** for additional time above usual contracted time.

SUMMARY OF JOB DESCRIPTION: To promote the growth and development of the beginning teacher to improve student learning. This is accomplished through providing support in guiding new teachers to enhance their planning, instruction, and content knowledge. Mentors help orient new teachers to the school community and teaching in general.

1. Assesses skills and needs (both initially and ongoing) of teachers new to the district and to profession for the purpose of ensuring appropriate assistance and strategies for identified mentoring activities.

2. Builds relationships with new teachers in the district for the purpose of establishing an environment of trust and collaboration.
3. Coaches and assists new teachers with teaching strategies, lesson planning, classroom management and identification of curriculum resources for the purpose of improving instruction and helping new teachers become successful.
4. Collaborate with other mentors and instructional coaches for the purpose of constructing exemplary lessons; identifying professional development needs of staff, and planning and coordinating professional development opportunities linked to changes in curriculum and teacher needs.
5. Models professionalism at all times for the purpose of demonstrating expected behaviors and actions of teachers.
6. Orients new teachers to mentor program such as responsibilities, schedules, and policies with regard to involvement with students.
7. Participates in meetings, workshops, trainings, and seminars for the purpose of conveying and/or gathering information required to perform functions.
8. Prepares a variety of written materials (e.g. newsletters, brochures, lesson plans, memos, letters, etc.) for the purpose of documenting activities and/or conveying information.
9. Prepares lesson plans on a variety of subject matter, models and teaches lessons for the purpose of demonstrating best practices in instruction, planning and classroom management.

Our district's belief is that quality professional development supports "best teaching practices," which translates into improved student learning in all areas. In order to deliver quality professional development to our staff, we feel collaboration in the planning and delivery between our Instructional Coaches, Lead Teachers, and Mentor Teachers is not only beneficial, but crucial. Professional development needs are created under the umbrella of district goals and leadership (as per the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, C-Plan).

Part 6

For a successful plan, effective teacher leaders (instructional coaches, lead teachers, and mentors) must be a top priority. The Edgewood-Colesburg selection team will be made up of four teachers (two from each building) and three administrators that will accept, review and score applications for assignment/reassignment to all teacher leadership roles and make recommendations to the superintendent. This will be done using a district-developed rubric. Teachers assigned to a leadership role must have at least three years of teaching experience and at least one year of experience in the school district.

The selection process will consist of a completed application and an interview with the selection team focusing on Teacher Effectiveness and Professional Growth. The completed application will include: a letter highlighting candidate's accomplishments with teaching and why they are seeking this position, a current resume, the past two years of their Individual Professional Development Plan, updated staff profile, and their most recent teacher evaluation completed by district administrator based on the Iowa Teaching Standards.

Criteria for Teacher Effectiveness

1. **Lesson Planning:** Lesson indicates several dimensions of instructional effectiveness including engagement strategies, formative assessments, flexibility and responsiveness providing an appropriate level of cognitive challenge.
2. **Engagement of Students:** Students are intellectually engaged in challenging content and can clearly articulate what they are learning and why it's important.
3. **Responsive and Flexible Teaching Strategies:** Teacher enhances learning by adjusting instruction when needed and implementation closely aligned with the MTSS model.
4. **Assessing Student Learning:** Formative assessments are used regularly to diagnose evidence of learning and instruction is adjusted and differentiated to address individual student misunderstandings.
5. **Clear Communication:** The teacher links the instructional purposes of the lesson to student interests; the directions and procedures are clear and anticipate possible student misunderstanding.
6. **Strong Questioning/Discussion Techniques:** A variety of high quality questions/prompts are used to challenge students.

Criteria for Professional Growth

1. **Engagement as a Teacher Leader:** Applicant is an accomplished teacher leader who works in collaboration with other teacher leaders.
2. **Articulation of Effective Teaching:** Applicant can effectively communicate pedagogical effectiveness and practice to varied audiences.
3. **Articulation of Teacher Leader:** Applicant is insightful about instructional coaching, demonstrating knowledge of experiences and responsibilities of current instructional coaches.
4. **Knowledge of PLC's work:** Applicant is a leader within the current PLC and is aware of PLC's work in a broader capacity and/or has an interest in and a willingness to learn more.
5. **Ability to Synthesize & Use Evidence:** Applicant makes a clear, concise, and compelling case for ideas while utilizing a number of resources to substantiate ideas.
6. **Ability to Balance Diverse Perspectives:** Applicant can articulate more than one point of view in an unbiased and thoughtful manner.
7. **Ability to Grow Capacity:** Applicant demonstrates a willingness in strengthening a wide variety of skills and responds positively to feedback and constructive criticism.
8. **Content Knowledge:** Applicant displays knowledge, skills, and experience related to the five district focus topics (curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology).
9. **Connection of Policy to Practice:** Applicant demonstrates commitment to ongoing learning in the five district focus topics, and synthesis of that learning with his/her practice as a classroom teacher AND as a teacher leader.
10. **Potential to Spread Expertise:** Applicant shows a willingness and ability to connect PLC communities and share ideas.
11. **Awareness of Network:** Applicant is highly conscious of the district's mission/vision and work as an organization and as a network of teacher leaders, including by not limited to, the work in the PLCs with he/she is most connected.
12. **Efficacy:** Applicant has the capacity to make a difference through his work and is willing to take the responsibility to do so.
13. **Craftsmanship:** Applicant can continually perfect his/her craft, and is willing to work toward excellence and pursue ongoing learning.
14. **Consciousness:** Applicant knows what and how he/she is thinking about his/her work in the moment and is willing to be aware of his/her actions and their effects.
15. **Interdependence:** Applicant knows that he/she will benefit from his/her participation in, contributions to and receipt of professional relationships, and is willing to create and change relationships to benefit his/her work.

Annual Review of Assignment:

Once selected, individual plans and goals will be established within individual professional development plans for each teacher leader. Data will be collected through reflections, observations, and surveys around the teacher's effectiveness in working with adults, communication, collaboration, content and pedagogical knowledge, as well as systems thinking in relation to their respective teacher leader position. Student learning data will also be collected and reviewed to determine the teacher leader's impact on teacher effectiveness in relation to student learning. The teacher leader will do quarterly self-evaluation and reflections on his/her effectiveness in the assigned position. This information will be used in collaboration with the administrator to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the individual in the teacher leader role throughout the year. Regular and timely feedback provided to the teacher leader by staff and administration along with personal reflections will help provide the support and ongoing data needed to perform at the highest level. A teacher who completes the time period of assignment to a leadership role may apply for assignment in a new leadership role or for reassignment to that role.

Part 7

One of the operating principles of the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM) is that leadership must be distributed if it is to be truly effective. Our teacher leadership system design takes this principle to heart by making teacher leaders the backbone of our professional development system.

Teacher leaders, with guidance from administrators and Building Leadership Teams, will be primarily responsible for planning and implementing professional development. Although not all teacher leaders will be responsible for the delivery of professional development, their input and expertise will be sought and utilized. They will use the **IPDM Cycle of Professional Development** in their planning for professional development and as a guide for their work with teachers.

The District currently uses **Professional Learning Communities** to improve instruction and increase student learning. The teachers value the collaboration time in the PLCs, therefore we have made the PLC work a priority. Our current teaching contract has eight days that are devoted to improving instruction and student achievement through PLC participation.

With our current method of professional development, we are getting “pockets of excellence”. By implementing a teacher leader, the success seen in one group of students can more readily be transferred to other students with the help of our teacher leaders who have a bird’s eye view of the district as a whole. The teacher leaders will visit classrooms, debrief to address teacher questions and implementation strategies with teachers, analyze data, plan district professional development with administration, as well as help staff in their individual classrooms.

Along with the additional time for collaboration that the TLC funding would provide, our staff determined there was room for additional improvement in classroom instructional techniques and assistance could be provided by the additional teacher leader roles: instructional coaches, lead teachers, and mentor teachers.

The ultimate role of an **instructional coach** is to increase the instructional capacity of teachers. An instructional coach is one who supports others in building their teaching skills and assists others in applying new knowledge. The person chosen for this position will provide ongoing professional development to teachers in the areas needing to be developed all while supporting the professional development provided by the district.

Lead teachers would assist in the delivery, training, implementation and monitoring of the instructional elements of the professional development structures (embedded professional development and research based professional practices). He/she will be a key player in all building professional development activities in regards to curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology. Lead teachers will assist with using data to determine needs, coordinate with instructional coach to design and deliver training, and provide opportunities for teachers to practice new skills.

Mentor teachers promote the growth and development of the beginning teacher to improve student learning. This is accomplished through providing support in guiding new teachers to enhance their planning, instruction, and content knowledge. Mentors help orient new teachers to the school community and teaching in general. One avenue to doing this is through professional development. The support and instruction given by the teacher mentor will be a director extension of the professional development occurring in the building.

With each of these initiatives, we have evaluation procedures in place that closely align with the **Iowa Professional Development Model**. We look at a need in our building, set a goal, enact a research-based strategy, analyze our results, then adjust and redefine our goal. In every case, the district uses a team to analyze these results. A variety of teams from the Building Leadership Teams, MTSS, IS3 team (for culture at the high school), or the Math/Literacy Team at the elementary make these decisions. The data used ranges from surveys and electronic data walls to meeting agendas/minutes and observations.

Staff also improves instruction as individuals or as a team through working towards goals on their Individual Teacher Professional Development Plan. These SMART goals are based on needs that were determined from review of student data, results of past professional development as well as building and district goals.

Using the teacher leaders will enable the district to provide coherent, coordinated, high-quality professional development in a variety of settings and with a variety of levels of support to meet the needs of teachers and the high standards laid out in the Iowa Professional Development Model. Our district’s belief is that quality professional development supports “best teaching practices,” which translates into improved student learning in all areas. In order to deliver quality professional development to our staff, we feel **collaboration** in the planning and delivery between our Instructional Coaches and Lead Teachers is not only beneficial, but crucial. Professional development needs are created under the umbrella of district goals and leadership (as per the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan).

Part 8

To ensure fidelity to and to discern the benefits of the TLC system, Ed-Co designed into our framework a system of evaluation that allows for both the output and outcome data. This data will determine the impact and effectiveness of the TLC system on both district and state TLC goals and allow for adjustments when necessary.

Goals:

1. Attract and retain highly qualified teachers by offering competitive salaries, robust professional development and a variety of leadership opportunities.
2. Maintain quality teachers in providing instruction in the classroom.
3. Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.
4. Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
5. Increase student achievement in 1) reading, 2) math, and 3) science through the improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology.

Goal 1: Attract and retain highly qualified teachers by offering competitive salaries, robust professional development and a variety of leadership opportunities.

Immediate Measures:

- Minimum salary of \$33,500 for all staff
- Define role descriptions and job descriptions
- Teacher leadership positions with documented increased responsibilities for our most effective teachers through a rigorous selection and review process.

On-going Measures:

- Weekly review of PLC logs
- Feedback from monthly mentor/mentee meetings
- Number of successful performance evaluations at end of year two
- Retention of new teachers over time
- Up to 25% of teachers in a leadership role.
- % of teacher leaders and other staff who report an increase in job satisfaction.

Goal 2: Maintain quality teachers in providing instruction in the classroom.

Immediate Measures:

- Ensure highly qualified staff are in all positions

On-going Measures:

- Teacher evaluations
- % of teacher leaders and other staff who report an increase in job satisfaction

Goal 3: Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.

Immediate Measures:

- Structure in place to accommodate peer observations

On-going Measures:

- Quarterly observations of model teachers
- Minutes review of PLC meetings
- Walk-through data relating to PD

Goal 4: Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.

Immediate Measures:

- Ensure that at least 25% of staff are in teacher leadership positions

On-going Measures

- Review number of staff in leadership roles
- Promote professional opportunities that develop leadership skills

Goal 5: Increase student achievement in 1) reading, 2) math, and 3) science through the improvement of curriculum, instruction, assessment, climate and technology.

Immediate Measures:

- MAP Testing
- Iowa Assessments
- FAST assessments
- Common formative assessments,

On-going Measures:

- Trends and results in MAP Testing, Iowa Assessments, and FAST assessments
- Common formative assessments
- Student perception surveys
- Suspension, office (discipline) referrals, dropout, graduation, and bullying prevention data.

Monitoring and Adjusting the Plan:

Monthly meetings and on-going data collection will ensure TLC goals are aligned with changing needs. Monitoring will take place through ongoing communication between teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators. District administrators will monitor the needs of teacher leaders and provide supports to ensure their success. Documentation of the frequency and type of collaboration with teachers and mentees will drive these data-based conversations along with reflection, observations and continues dialogue regarding the effectiveness of the TLC plan. Annual performance evaluations will measure teachers' effectiveness and growth.

TLC system goals will be analyzed annually based on data gathered from student achievement, self-assessments, recruitment and retention data, surveys, and minutes from meetings with stakeholders. Building leadership teams will revise job descriptions and responsibilities for teacher leader roles based on identified needs.

Feedback received from informal conversations, surveys, and scheduled meetings with educators and stakeholders will provide data to measure the impact and effectiveness of the TLC program.

Part 9

Our district has a strong belief that all teachers are leaders at various time during each school year. One way this is evident is in our weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) work. The teachers value the collaboration time in the PLCs, therefore we have made PLCs a priority. Our current teaching contract has eight full days that are devoted to improving instruction as well as the weekly PLC participation focused on student achievement.

Current Infrastructure

PLCs are in place for collaborative learning
50% of staff have attended three day national PLC Institute during the past two summers
98% of staff wish to participate in the additional collaboration time
51% are willing to fulfill the lead teacher responsibilities
24% are interested in the instructional coaching positions
Multiple committees already developed and utilized in the shared decision making process in both buildings as well as district

Capacity to Implement Plan (based on past successes)

The TLC plan will support current initiatives - MTSS, PBIS, SWVPP, 1:1 technology, standard based grading and Iowa CORE alignment.

Our building leadership teams are on a rotation every two years which increases staff understanding and helps build the team approach to all our initiatives.

Our PLCs share learning enhancing the implementation in other classrooms.

Systematic Approach

In sustaining the TLC plan, the analysis of data will be crucial. The AEA currently provides support in Building Leadership Teams. The outside evaluation and influence of the AEA will provide guidance to selecting and reviewing the most valuable data. The Iowa Professional Development Model currently guides our professional development and our PLC process is the vehicle for continuous improvement. Our PLCs evaluate student data, seek collaborative solutions, learn and implement researched based strategies and reevaluate. This process will also allow us to evaluate if our TLC plan is being successfully implemented or if there needs to be modifications

The data found by the teacher leaders will be reported out to PLC and PD teams in each building regularly, school board members quarterly and the SIAC community group annually. Annual surveys will be administered to initial and career teachers, mentors and mentees, administrators, and Building Leadership Teams for the purpose of collecting feedback on the success of the TLC plan. The selection committee will annually review data to determine the productivity of each coach, mentor and lead teacher before recommending teachers for leadership positions for the next year. This includes but is not limited to:

- Data from Iowa Assessments, FAST, MAP, MTSS, PBIS, Clarity survey, mentor surveys
- Logs of PLC team meetings and results of efforts
- Logs of teacher observations/meetings

All of our district teacher leader roles (**instructional coaches, lead teachers, and mentor teachers**) will require support through the AEA. We plan to work with the AEA and other districts to provide learning opportunities for our instructional coaches and make it an embedded process in our district using Jim Knight's Instructional Coaching methodology. The District and AEA work together on improving instruction on many initiatives already. The AEA will continue to support and provide the additional expertise to make our initiatives successful.

The vision for the Ed-Co Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) plan strengthens and extends the district mission to *assist and ensure that each individual achieves his or her level of educational excellence*. Leadership opportunities provided by grant funding will increase the effectiveness of aligning instructional practices to the Iowa Core, Multi-Tiered System of Supports, and early literacy. Implementing the TLC plan allows principals and teacher leaders to foster and grow a culture for teachers and students where learning is pursued, supported, expected, and celebrated by all. The budget for the Ed-Co TLC will be used to supplement pay of teacher leaders, hire new staff to cover instructional class time for teacher leaders removed from full-time classroom loads, and to provide professional development for teacher leaders.

The budget illustrated below outlines the plan investing in the Ed-Co TLC program and opportunities for 30% of the teaching staff. The funding will be used over the 2015-16 fiscal year. Ed-Co's certified enrollment of 414 generated a budget total of \$127,851. Specifically, the TLC budget will fund Instructional Coaches, Lead Teachers, and Mentor Teacher Leaders. Our local data with district goals determined the leadership positions that are outlined in our proposal. A budget narrative and proposed budget that aligns with vision and goals outline in the plan are below:

- a. **\$13,223.25** has been estimated to meet one of the five "must haves" of the Ed-Co TLC plan of ensuring all full-time teachers have a minimum salary of \$33,500. Currently, Ed-Co offers full time teachers a minimum salary of \$28,825.00. This minimum is calculated by using our Ed-Co base salary and the addition of Teacher Quality funds. This increase will be another incentive for new teachers to join our district.
- b. **\$55,603.48** has been allocated to fund the salary supplements for teachers in leadership roles. This amount includes salary and benefits. Each leadership position supported through TLC funding will be hired using the rigorous selection process detailed in part 6 of this grant. The plan includes the following:
 1. **Instructional Coaches** (One at each level: .5 FTE K-6 and .5 FTE 7-12). Each coach will receive **\$6,440** for 10 additional days and time above the usual contracted time.
 - Support implementation of best/effective practice through observation, modeling, co-planning, team teaching, and providing ongoing support.
 - Assist in professional development design and delivery with an emphasis on student data analysis , identification of areas for improvement within core instruction, investigation of researched-based strategies to increase student learning and teacher effectiveness.
 - 50% time leadership responsibilities and 50% classroom responsibilities.

- ii. **Lead Teachers (8)** Each Lead Teacher will receive **\$3,200** for 10 additional days.
 - Serve as a “lead” member facilitating 1 of 8 PLC teams.
 - Assist in professional development related to implementation of district initiatives.
 - iii. **Mentor Teachers (5)** Each Mentor Teacher will receive **\$1,500** for additional time above usual contracted time.
 - Assist in professional development by providing support to initial teachers in district implementation of district initiatives.
 - Provide individualized mentoring to initial teachers for two years by supporting quality teaching, improving content and pedagogical knowledge of initial teacher.
- c. **\$51,024.75** is earmarked for covering the costs for the time teachers in leadership roles are not providing direct instruction in a classroom and to cover the cost when teachers are out of their classroom to observe, and co-teach with another teacher.
- 1. In order to allow the Instruction Coach(es) the time necessary to fulfill the job responsibilities, the district will need to hire an additional employee to fill the position vacated by the teachers taking on the Instructional Coach roles. **\$45,234** is allocated for this position.
 - 2. **\$5,790** is allocated for substitute teachers when teachers are out of their classroom to observe, model, and mentor with other teachers. This is the area where additional funding streams or grant funds may be transferred to make program more successful.
- d. The approximate amount used to provide professional development related to the leadership pathways will be **\$10,000**.
- 1. The district plans to partner with Keystone AEA and neighboring districts to provide teacher leadership training using Jim Knight’s Instructional Coaching.
 - 2. The district also plans to continue with attendance at the national PLC Institute in Minnesota. Approximately 50% of our staff have attended.
- e. No funds **\$0** have been budgeted to cover the other cost associated with the approved TLC plan.

If we have professional development that is aligned, differentiated, and of appropriate intensity, then instruction provided to each student will be engaging, meaningful, personalized, rigorous, and cognitively demanding. The goal of the proposed teacher leadership model is to improve the quality and responsiveness of professional learning opportunities for staff and improve instruction through the implementation of various district strategies and initiatives. If we establish distributed leadership opportunities that provide quality PD to support personalized learning, reward professional growth and effective teaching, then we will attract and retain quality teachers, improve student learning, and make Ed-Co Schools a learning environment in which everyone wants to join. We are committed to providing a personalized learning system at Ed-Co.