

Which Practices Have Defined and Shaped Effective Teacher Leadership?

Insights from Six Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Schools

Eskolta School Research & Design, Inc.

For the NYCDOE Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality

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About the TIF Grant

- In Sept. 2012, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) was awarded a five-year Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to create and implement a more nuanced career teacher career pathway to:
 - Strengthen instructional practice
 - Compensate effective teachers for taking on additional roles and responsibilities
 - Improve students' achievement
- In the 2013-14 school year, 78 NYCDOE middle schools began piloting a model of teacher leadership to allow the NYCDOE to learn about effective combinations of teacher leadership roles within a school

Recommendations Based on Effective Teacher Leader Practices

*Interviews with teacher leaders and principals at six Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) schools revealed insights about **key attributes** of **adaptive leadership** and **technical expertise** that defined and shaped effective teacher leader work.*

Before

What to look for when **selecting teacher leaders** for the role

Early On

How to build or use existing structures to facilitate **effective communication and collaboration**

Throughout the Year

What **on-going strategies** best support and ensure effective work

What to Look For When Selecting Teacher Leaders

*Our interviews suggest traits to look for in teacher leaders falling into two categories: **Adaptive Leadership** and **Instructional Knowledge***

What to Look For: Adaptive Leadership

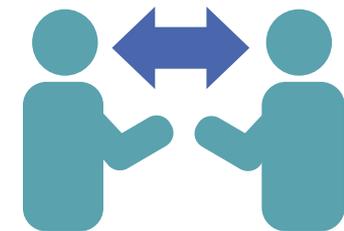
Openness to Collaboration:

- Are sought out for **advice** by others
- Conduct own **intervisitations** or peer learning
- Deliberately communicate that work is for **growth** rather than evaluation purposes



Ability to Share and Reflect:

- Take pride in practice, but are **actively interested in changing it**
- Are motivated to individually use tools and **thoughtfully model practices** with other teachers
- Understand their role as a **support for smart accountability**



See pp. 3-4 & 6-7

What to Look For: Instructional Knowledge

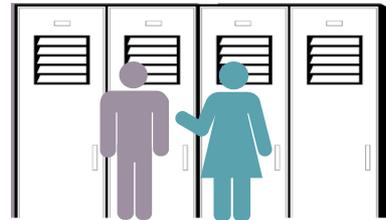
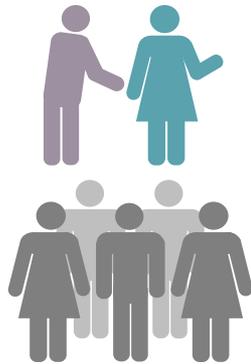
While less critical than the adaptive components and less mentioned as a focal point in discussions, interviews suggested that a teacher leader's **perspective on instruction** is a relevant indicator for the role.

- Teacher leader understands how components in the Danielson *Framework* **guide practice**
- Teacher leader can use the Danielson *Framework* as a tool to **reinforce existing effective practices**
- Teacher leader views Domain 2 of the *Framework*, with a **focus on the needs of learners** and **student engagement**, as central to their work
- Teacher leader not only has strong content knowledge, but more importantly has a curiosity about **new content and practices**

On-Going Strategies for Effective Communication & Collaboration

Recommendations for building new or leveraging existing structures to promote effective communication and collaboration.

On-Going Strategies: Communication Structures



Introducing the Teacher Leader Role

- As early as possible, convey to staff that teacher leader work is **centered around growth, not accountability**

Routine Communication

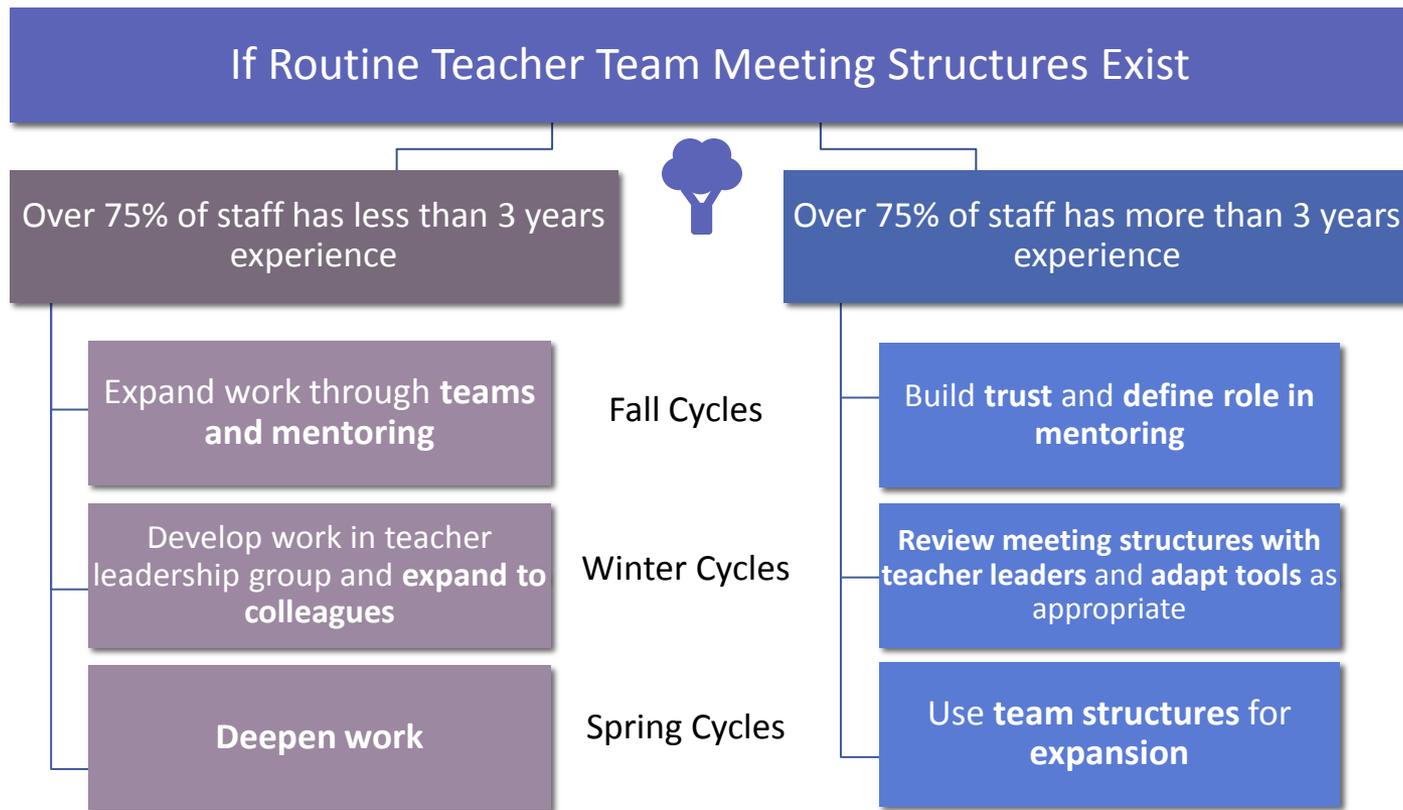
- Use **daily, informal check-ins** to facilitate effective communication
- To avoid blurring lines between accountability and support, develop a **clear understanding** with teacher leaders about **the kinds of information that should be shared**

Structured Planning with Teacher Leaders

- Include teacher leaders on the **principal's cabinet** or set up distinct **weekly or bi-weekly leadership meetings**
- Discuss how **to fit TIF-based approaches and tools** into structures already in place to provide cohesion for PD initiatives

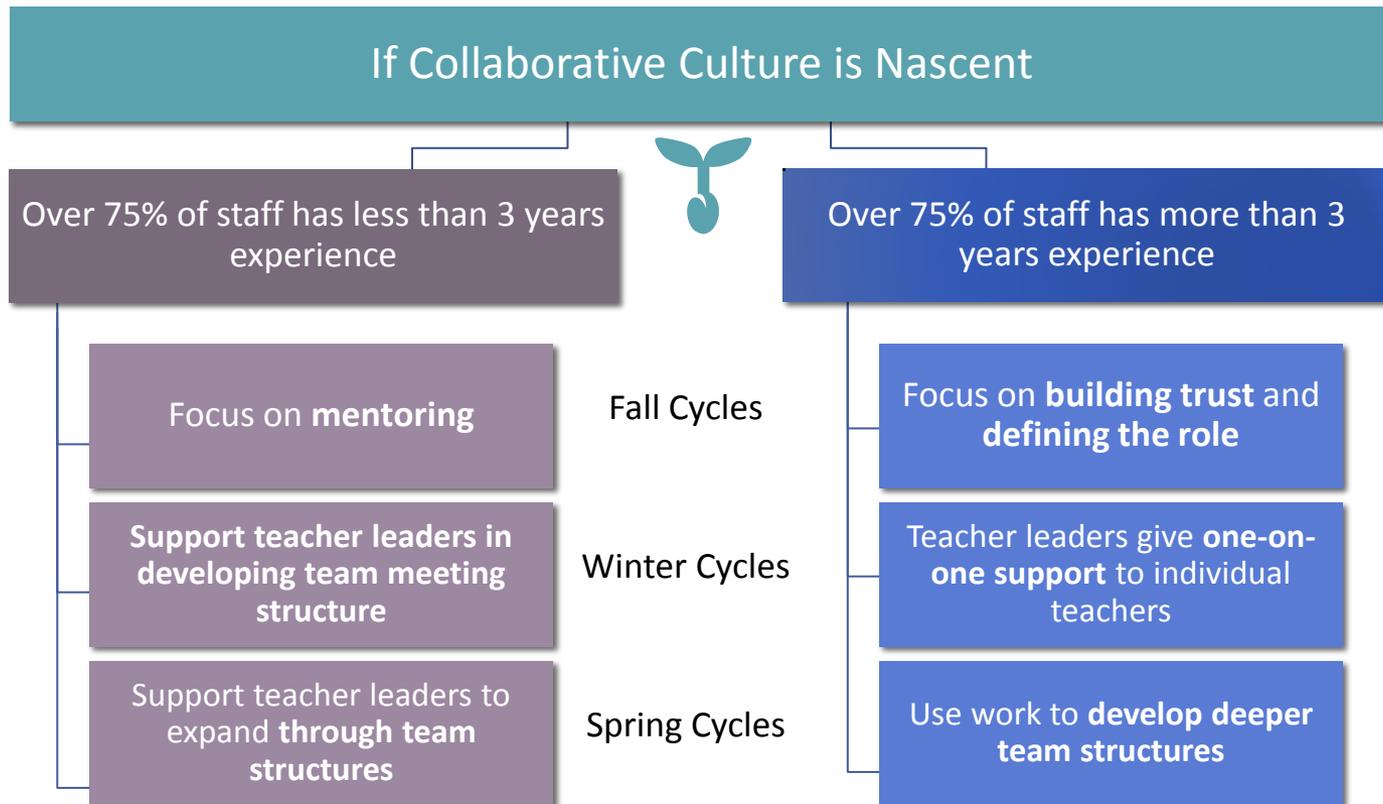
On-Going Strategies: Differentiating Support

*Differentiate expectations for progress and the support given to teacher leaders based on two considerations: (1) **existing team meeting structures** and (2) the **experience of the faculty at the school**.*



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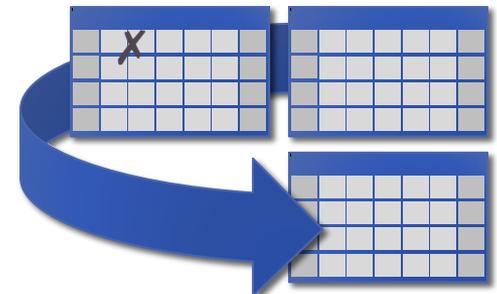


On-Going Strategies: Time Management

Teacher leaders employ a range of strategies for managing limited time and juggling multiple commitments.

	X		X			
		X	X		X	
	X		X			
	X		X	X		

	X					
	X					



On-going Commitments (~ 10 hours a week)

- ✓ Prep materials for team meetings
- ✓ Lead department or grade team meetings
- ✓ Conduct one-on-one mentoring or visits with teachers
- ✓ Meet with leadership in person

Every other week

- ✓ Email easy-to-read updates to the principal
- ✓ Schedule classroom visits and debriefs with diligence and flexibility

Once per cycle

- ✓ Select a particular Danielson component to bring a focus to the work with teachers