Professional learning leader role assessment

Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems highlights the significant role of professional learning leaders within the high-performing school systems. These leaders are most often teachers who advance along a career track and assume responsibility for contributing to the professional learning of others.

The tool on pp. 5-7 helps teachers and teacher leaders in examining the roles of professional learning leaders within the high-performing systems, comparing them with current roles within their own systems, and identifying ways to focus the roles more specifically on professional learning leadership.

Preparing for the assessment

Purpose: To facilitate conversation about the roles and responsibilities of professional learning leaders within high-performing school systems and within their own school or school system. To consider ways to strengthen and expand the role of teacher leaders so that they focus more specifically on professional learning.

Materials needed: "Best-practice takeaways" by Joellen Killion (pp. 1-3); Professional learning leader role assessment (pp. 6-7).

Best uses: Within teams of teacher leaders and within school and district leadership teams.

Time: 85 minutes. The task described may be divided into several meetings.

In preparation for the meeting: Invite participants to read the "Best-practice takeaways" by Joellen Killion (pp. 1-3) and review *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems.*

At the meeting:

Steps	Time
1. Ask participants in table groups to identify which ways teachers serve as professional learning leaders in the high-performing schools and to note which ways currently exist within their schools or school systems. • Create a chart labeled with the title for each role that currently exists; list on each the major functions of each role and the primary audience for each role. Participants may want to add other information such as funding source, supervisor or persons responsible for the role, etc. to each chart if the information is available. • Invite participants to identify other roles not identified in the study that currently exist in their schools or school system that provide support for professional learning. Create charts for each of these additional roles. • To facilitate sharing, create electronic templates or wall charts of the criteria score sheet for small groups to use.	15 minutes
2. Divide group members among the roles that exist within the school or school system.	3 minutes
3. Ask each small group to assess the viability and potential impact of each professional learning leader role for transforming teaching and student learning using the following criteria and assessment guide on pp. 6-7. Emphasize the importance of using evidence when possible to support their assessment. After the assessment is completed, ask each group to consider the questions for strengthening the role.	30 minutes
4. Reconvene in the large group to share the results of the small group work.	15 minutes
5. Determine next steps as a group to advance the recommendations.	20 minutes

Source: Killion, J. (2016). *Facilitator guide for Beyond PD: Teacher professional learning in high-performing systems.* Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

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Assess the role based on the following criteria. Feel free to adapt the criteria if desired. While it is helpful to have data to support assessments, teams may find that they do not have specific evidence and must rely on professional judgment or experience rather than specific data to support their assessment.

Role: _____   Overall effectiveness score: _____

Criteria	Score range: 1-3	Score
1. Those in this role work directly with teachers within the school or school system.	1 (low, less than 5% of the teachers) to 3 (50% of the teachers or more)	
2. The majority of time of those in this role is focused on improving teaching and student learning.	1 (low, less than 20%) to 3 (80% or more)	
3. The school system has established sustained funding to support this role.	1 (low, funding tied to temporary income or external resources) to 3 (line item in the staffing budget)	
4. Those serving in this role have defined performance criteria for their evaluation.	1 (low, no criteria or currently using standards for another role) to 3 (defined performance standards and appraisal process specific to job responsibilities)	
5. Those serving in this role are thoughtfully selected based on criteria that include performance, experience, and readiness.	1 (low, no established selection or advancement process defined) to 3 (career track defined with ongoing opportunities to prepare for and advance into the role of professional learning leader)	
6. All teachers have access to professional learning that prepares them for this role.	1 (low, no preparation available) to 3 (ongoing preparation programs available to all teachers)	
7. Professional learning leaders have coaching, ongoing support, and supervision to increase the effectiveness of their work.	1 (low, no coaching available or only supervision) to 3 (regular coaching, ongoing professional learning, and support required for all serving in this role)	
8. Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the role (not the person) in achieving school system, school, teacher, and student improvement goals.	1 (low, no evaluation of the role conducted) to 3 (scheduled evaluation of the role using multiple sources of evidence including feedback from teachers being served)	

DISCUSSION

Based on the overall effectiveness score and the score for individual criterion, what recommendations do you have for strengthening the effectiveness of this professional learning leader role within your school or school system? Be as specific as possible with your recommendation. Be prepared to share your recommendations with the larger group. Which of the recommendations are top priorities for action? What will we do to take action on these top-priority recommendations?

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