Learning Community and Workplace Culture

Educator deepens their understanding around improvements in community and workplace culture.

**Key Method**

The educator uses the Learn-Design-Do-Reflect cycle to identify places of improvement in community and workplace culture. The educator implements strategies for improvement, guiding a group of stakeholders to develop an intended outcome.

**Method Components**

Association leadership means understanding how to create and guide meaningful, positive, and powerful collective action. It means learning to lead members of large, culturally diverse, and engaged groups and steering the activities of group members in the direction of desired change. Within the context of the association, teacher leaders can build bridges with administrators and other stakeholders in order to advance quality instructional practice and the right policies to make that practice possible.

Association Competencies for Teacher Leaders

- Organizational Effectiveness: Leading with Vision
- Organizational Effectiveness: Leading with Skill
- Organizing and Advocacy
- Building the Capacity of Others
- Learning Community and Workplace Culture

**Learn-Design-Do-Reflect Cycle**

The Learn-Design-Do-Reflect Cycle is a tool used in the NEA Teacher Leadership Institute to support the development of teacher leadership. The following descriptors will help you understand your participation in each step of the process.

*Learn* - Delve into resources; explore the needs of your school, district, or state; and self-assess in order to gain a deep understanding of research, best practices, the needs of your educational setting, and your own professional learning needs.

*Design* - Design an action plan that addresses at least one of the needs of your school, district, or state.

*Do* - Implement your plan and collect information and evidence about the challenges and successes of your implementation.

*Reflect* - Take time to reflect on the outcomes and the process of implementation of your action plan and consider next steps.

*Learning Community, Workplace Culture, and Teacher Leadership*
According to the NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies (2018), developing your teacher leadership in the area of Learning Community and Workplace Culture includes the following (see Resource section for link to the complete guide):

**Emerging Level**

- Understand the importance of contracts and policies.
- Identify how contracts and policies can create, sustain, or develop positive teaching and learning environments.

**Developing Level**

- Understand the landscape of major policy and contractual initiatives.
- Use research to identify contract provisions and policy options for a positive impact on teaching and learning conditions.
- Foster a positive workplace culture of support and encouragement.

**Performing Level**

- Utilize interest-based and/or problem-solving strategies to guide the development and implementation of desirable changes in working conditions.
- Advocate for contract provisions and policy options that have a positive impact on teaching and learning environments.

**Transforming Level**

- Lead members and other stakeholders in their effort to develop new and innovative policies and contractual articles to enhance learning environments for students, educators, and/or families.
- Types of Collaborating Purposefully Leadership Plans
- Identify current education issues as they relate to working conditions and share that information with others.
- Utilize research to develop a stance on issues that positively impact teaching and learning conditions.
- Establish appropriate strategies to bring about desired changes in working conditions.
- Advocate for policies and provisions that positively impact teaching and learning.
- Understand the relationships among education community members and others. Organize members in the development and implementation of innovative strategies to bring desired change in working conditions.

### Supporting Research


This book emphasizes the importance of leaders (using the U.S. Army as an example of a world-class organization in need of transformation) in the development of cultures that are conducive to leadership development.


Hattie makes a strong case for collaborative expertise based on his meta-analyses of effective teaching practices and builds on his visible learning work.


“Teachers working in schools with strong professional environments improved, over 10 years, 38% more than teachers in schools with weak professional environments.”

In this study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, researchers from the University of Toronto and University of Minnesota concluded that collective leadership has a stronger influence on student achievement than individual leadership—and higher-performing schools award greater influence to teacher teams, parents, and students. Further, the study found that principals and district leaders do not lose influence as others gain influence.

### Resources

**Templates**

Teacher Leadership Context Circle Map (Word Doc) for Artifact 1

To use this one, click the download icon in the top right corner and save to your computer.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vy5pUKQ_tT-mljIK2fB-h3oOb2QDSwj7MyPqizsw7Ec/edit?usp=sharing

2018–Current Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows Action Plan Template for Artifact 3

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FDDHJyqAS3PA4lJcZpWzlPsPbuSwRZsbfr2C546Xzw/edit

TLI fellows from 2018–current should have completed this template as part of the institute. Please upload your Action Plan as evidence for this micro-credential.

Action/Design Plan Template for Non-Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows for Artifact 3

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nrr4Gjig7FNe0KSW9vRg7soEDk-VPb-fzyn3QN1Y4c/edit?usp=sharing

Anyone NOT in the Teacher Leadership Institute should use this template.

**Resources**


NEA video on engendering commitment with colleagues: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=il9u9v2D2_w (13:48)

Arbinger Institute TED Talk video – dealing with others and demonstrating the worth of persons: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyhOTjCcR4 (19:03)

Arbinger Institute article about the video above: https://arbinger.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/resolving_the_heart_of_conflict.pdf (3 pages)

Glenn Tecker: Building a more effective culture and increasing skills of board members: http://www.tecker.com/the-importance-of-continued-board-development/ (1 page)

Tecker TED Talk: Tribal leadership on organizational culture: https://www.ted.com/talks/david_logan_on_tribal_leadership#t-970714 (16:39)


Be a Cage-Buster: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr13/vol70/num07/Be_a_Cage-Buster.aspx (6 pages)


ASCD: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr15/vol72/num07/Getting-Genuine-Commitment-for-Change.aspx (4 pages)

The Multiplier Effect (book) by Wiseman, Allen, & Foster. Explore the characteristics of leaders that facilitate positive growth at exponentially higher levels than in other organizations.

https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-multiplier-effect-liz-wiseman/1124306244?ean=9781452271897

Leadership and Self-Deception by The Arbinger Institute – Fundamental changes in the way we perceive the world and our willingness to reflect on our own practice are at the heart of becoming a transformative leader.


Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes Are High
To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following five artifacts as evidence of your learning. Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.

Artifact 1: Teacher Leadership Circle Map
(see template in Resource section)
Fill in the Circle Map using the template in the Resource section, or draw your own on chart paper.

Directions for Circle Map

- Center Circle: Core Theme/Belief

Use page 5 of the NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies Booklet (see Resource section) to identify the Core Belief/Theme that resonates with you.
Middle Circle: Context

Synthesize the information you gathered in Part 1. You may include any other relevant contextual information to guide your thinking and recording for the middle circle:

- District (suburban/rural/urban)
- Colleagues
- Site/district administration
- Teacher leadership culture
- Demographics (school, community)
- Who are the stakeholders in your school/district

Outer Circle: Needs

After identifying your teacher leadership context, identify and record in the outer circle the needs of your school and/or district in relationship to learning community and workplace culture. Consider the following guiding questions as you identify your contextual needs:

- Is there a stakeholder group that is not represented in decision-making?
- What inequities currently exist in your school/district?
- What resources are needed to address these inequities?
- What are the needs of the community?
- How does the school address the needs of the community?
- What are the needs of my school/district?
- What are the needs of my colleagues/my association?
- How do the needs of my colleagues affect the classroom, school, and district?
- What are the needs of my local association?
- How do the needs of my association affect me and my colleagues?

Artifact 2: Review

Connect your Teacher Leader Circle Map to the learning community and workplace culture by answering the following questions (50–150 words or 3–5 bullet points each):

1. What might your role be as a teacher leader to positively impact the identified learning community and workplace culture needs of your stakeholders (students, school, district, association) based on your context and grounded in your core belief/theme?
2. What might your role be as a teacher leader to inspire and support other potential teacher leaders in creating an effective learning community and workplace culture based on your context and grounded in your core beliefs/theme?

Artifact 3: Design

Use the Teacher Leadership learning community and workplace culture competency to design an activity or action that you can do to address an identified need from your Leadership Circle Map.

Complete and upload one of the following design templates:

- Option 1: 2018–Current Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows Action Plan Template
  (see template in Resource section, or use the one you created in your state cohort)
- Option 2: Action/Design Plan Template for Non-Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows
  (see template in Resource section)
Artifact 4: Do (part 1)
Upload 3 different artifacts that show evidence of implementation of your action plan, annotated with descriptions (20–50 words each). These artifacts may include:

- Websites
- Newsletter
- Emails
- Recorded webinars
- Presentations
- Emails to or from participants
- Online forums (screenshots of conversations)
- Completed websites
- Products developed during the process
- Artifacts from tools like Remind or Hussle
- Voice recorded messages for phone lists
- Group chats/text messages

Description should include:
- Time/date
- Number of participants
- Purpose of artifact and how it was used

Artifact 5: Feedback from Participants—Do (part 2)
Obtain feedback from at least two stakeholders in attendance. Use these prompts to obtain necessary feedback to serve as evidence. Your chosen participants should respond to each prompt in 2–3 sentences or 2–3 bullet points.

- How did the teacher leader engage you in learning community and workplace culture?
- What were the intended outcomes, and to what degree were the outcomes achieved?
- What did you gain from participating in this experience?
- If the teacher leader were to implement this plan again, what could be done differently? Why?
- How did the teacher leader address diversity, equity, and cultural competence during this activity?

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<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Artfact 1: Circle Map</td>
<td>Circle map is complete, and directions were followed closely</td>
<td>Circle map is missing important information</td>
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<td>Core Theme/Belief is from the Teacher Leadership Book</td>
<td>Core Theme/Belief is not from the Teacher Leadership Book</td>
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<td>The context section is complete with enough context to be useful in understanding the full picture</td>
<td>The context is missing some important information</td>
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<td>Needs are listed and</td>
<td>Needs may be too broad and out of your realm of influence</td>
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| Artifact 2: Action Plan | Template is completely filled out  
Needs are identified using a positive, proactive, professional voice and are facts, not opinions | Template is incomplete or not thoughtfully done  
Professional goals may not be measurable, actionable, and/or relevant to learning community and workplace culture | Stakeholder presents analysis or feedback which describes how the submitter demonstrated limited ability to organize and strengthen stakeholders in community and workplace culture improvements. |
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<td>Needs and current reality are based on actual evidence, not opinion</td>
<td>Needs may be based partially on opinion and/or evidence is not substantial</td>
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<td>Results are realistic and focus on affecting the practice of others</td>
<td>Results may not be realistic and/or do not focus on affecting the practice of others</td>
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<td>Description is clear, and activity directly relates to professional goals, needs, desired results, and learning community and workplace culture</td>
<td>Description is not clear and/or the activity does not directly relate to professional goals, needs, desired results, and learning community and workplace culture</td>
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</table>
| Artifact 3: Design     | Activity Design  
Template is completely filled out  
Activity design aligns to your identified needs  
Activity design is actionable | Activity Design  
Template is not completely filled out  
Activity design loosely aligns to your identified needs  
Activity design is not actionable | Activity Design  
Template is not used  
Activity design does not align to your identified needs  
Activity design is not actionable |
|                        |                                                                                 |                                                                                 |                                                                                 |
| Artifact 4: Evidence of Implementation | Three artifacts are submitted  
Artifacts are from implementation of plan  
All artifacts contain a | Less than three artifacts are submitted  
Artifacts are not related to implementation  
Artifact descriptions are | Less than three artifacts are submitted  
Artifacts are not related to implementation  
Artifact descriptions are |
Reflection

400-500-word limit

Please answer the following reflective questions. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

- How will your knowledge of learning community and workplace culture impact your leadership work with others?
- How will you continue to lead learning activities to enhance the practice of others at various levels of leadership?
- What are your next steps to continue your growth as a teacher leader?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on the teacher leader as well as on others in the professional context of earning this micro-credential. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.

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