Policy Engagement and Relationships

Educator deepens understanding of how their strengths in teacher leadership impact the policy engagement and relationships process.

Key Method

The educator uses the Learn-Design-Do-Reflect cycle to conduct a needs assessment and engage stakeholders around a policy issue. The educator deepens their understanding of the policy engagement and relationships process and how their own biases, experiences of privilege, and personal values impact this competency.

Method Components

Smart education policy should be shaped and guided by what accomplished teachers know about teaching and learning. Too often, individuals with little to no classroom experience are in charge of making policy decisions. Teacher leaders are willing to step up and step out of their classrooms to serve in school, district, state, or national policy leadership capacities to help shape and, eventually, implement the policies that support student learning.

Policy Competencies for Teacher Leaders

- Policy Implementation

- Policy Advocacy

- Policy Making

- Policy Engagement and Relationships

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 practice, 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.

Policy Engagement, Relationships, and Teacher Leadership

According to the NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies (2018), developing your teacher leadership in the area of Policy and Relationships includes the following: (See Resources section for link to the complete guide.)

Emerging Level

- Prepare themselves for conversations about current issues regarding education.

- Know the names, roles, alignments, and functions of various policy makers.

Developing Level

- Develop powerful messages about school culture, climate, and environment.

- Connect with policymakers, using methods that effectively engage them and enhance their willingness to listen and learn.

Performing Level

- Take formal leadership roles that directly influence or involve policy making.

- Build strong relationships with policy makers that encompass the ability to both listen to and influence them.

Transforming Level

- Identify and support other teacher leaders to take a role in policy making.

- Foster the development of coalitions and gain the support of organizations in pursuit of a positive policy agenda.

- Influence other teacher leaders to own the positive policy agenda.

Types of Policy Engagement and Relationship Leadership Plans

- Use powerful messages about school culture and environment shared on professional social media.

- Maintain strong connections with policymakers through personal contacts.

- Engage policy makers in ongoing dialogue recorded in a communication log with the purpose of enhancing perspectives of all.

- Pursue and accept a formal leadership role with influence or direct involvement with policy making.

- Improve or strengthen relationships with policy makers to enhance learning and leverage influence by attending board meetings, facilitating a community meeting, and/or organizing a meet-and-greet.

- Empower other teacher leaders to take action in campaigning for policy advocacy.

- Develop coalitions pursuing a positive policy agenda.

- Practice collaborative leadership by empowering other organizations and teachers with full ownership of the policy agenda.

- Record and share the results of policy advocacy through narratives, testimonies, or other recorded methods.

Supporting Research

Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). Work redesign. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

This seminal book examines the characteristics of designing work around organizational goals and missions. This research comes from the organizational sciences and has direct application in how work is organized for those working to engage others in policy work.

Hattie, J. (2015). What works best in education: The politics of collaborative expertise (Open Ideas). Pearson. Retrieved from **https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/corporate/global/pearson-dot-**

com/files/hattie/150526_ExpertiseWEB_V1.pdf

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

Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2016). Developing workplaces where teachers stay, improve, and succeed. The Albert Shanker Institute. Retrieved from http://distributedleadership.org/assets/asi-(2016).pdf

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

Leithwood, K., Seashore-Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2010). Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.

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 that 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 1To use this, click the download icon in the top-right corner and save to your computer.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ly5pUKQt_T-_mfJIK2fB-h3oObQDSwJ7MYpyizsw7Ec/edit?usp=sharing

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

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FDD3iyqAS3PA4LJcZpWzlPsPBuSwRPZsbfr2C546Xzw/edit

TLI fellows from 2018 to present 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/1NrRa4G1iG7FNeoKSWUvRg7SoEDk-VPb-fzyn3QN1Y4c/edit?usp=sharing

Any one NOT in the Teacher Leadership Institute should use this template

Resources

7 Steps to Create a Policy Study

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLUbviQoef8

Engaging Stakeholders

https://www2.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/stakeholderlores.pdf (16 pages)

She Should Run

http://www.sheshouldrun.org/mission

Activities vs. Outcomes: The Difference Makes All the Difference

Learning Forward, October 2015, Vol. 36 No. 5

https://learningforward.org/docs/default-source/jsd-october-2015/activities-vs--outcomes.pdf

Embarking on Action Research

Educational Leadership, April 2009

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb09/vol66/num05/Embarking-on-Action-Research.aspx

Department of Education Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Document https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/compneedsassessment.pdf

A U.S. Department of Education guide to developing a needs assessment tool

Design Thinking for Educators

https://designthinkingforeducators.com/

Power Mapping

http://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/PowerMapping.pdf

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Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing evaluation for Parts 1 and 3 and a score of "Proficient" for each component in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions

350-500-word limit

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

What is your professional mission and vision for teacher leadership?
Describe your professional learning goals for completing this micro-credential.
Describe the professional context for earning this micro-credential.
Number of years in education, subject area, etc.
School/community, e.g., rural, urban, suburban, school level, student/community demographics, socioeconomic data, etc.
Share any additional information that may help someone understand your context.
Describe your current roles and general experience teacher leadership at the school, district, and/or state level.
Who are the stakeholders in your community?

- **Passing:** Professional mission and vision clearly states what the educator hopes to achieve in their career and what success will look like when achieved. Professional context is reasonable and accurate and includes specific professional learning goals as an outcome of completing this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

Evidence from a meeting or event where you implemented part of your plan. (Examples include PTA meetings, Board of Education meetings, Site councils, Teacher-Based Teams, etc.) You may submit any of the following:

- An unedited audio or video recording of a meeting or event (10-minute maximum).

- A written account of the meeting that includes: person(s) in the meeting, your relationship to them, meeting description, and how you demonstrated competence in this skill (500-word limit).

- Artifacts, documents, photos, and/or other data which demonstrate evidence of your leadership in a particular meeting or event in your plan. This evidence must be accompanied by a full description of the meeting or event, your relationship to those present, a meeting or event description, and how you demonstrated competence in this skill (500-word limit).

Gather feedback from someone who attended your meeting or activity. It should focus on how the submitter effectively organized and led stakeholders. This feedback may be submitted in any of the following formats:

- a written testimonial (500-word limit)

- an unedited video or audio (5 min maximum)
- a survey of participants

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Circle Map	Circle map is complete, and directions were followed closely Core belief/theme is from the Teacher Leadership Book The context section is complete with enough context to be useful in understanding the full picture Needs are listed and realistic and within your sphere of influence Needs are identified using a positive proactive, professional voice and are facts, not opinions	Circle map is missing important information Core belief/theme is not from the Teacher Leadership Book The context is missing some important information The needs may be too broad and out of your realm of influence Needs are based on opinion and not fact Professional or proactive voice is not used	Circle map is incomplete Core belief/theme not identified Very little context given Needs are not identified or not based on facts Needs are stated in a negative tone that is not proactive
Artifact 2: Action Plan	Template is completely filled out Professional goals are measurable, actionable, and relevant to policy engagement and relationships Needs and current reality are based on actual evidence, NOT opinion Results are realistic and focus on affecting the practice of others Description is clear, and activity directly relates to professional goals, needs, desired results, and policy engagement and relationships	Template is incomplete or not thoughtfully done Professional goals may not be measurable, actionable, and/or relevant to policy engagement and relationships Needs may be based partially on opinion and/or evidence is not substantial Results may not be realistic and/or do not focus on affecting the practice of others Description not clear and/or the activity does not directly relate to professional goals, needs, desired results, and policy engagement and relationships	Template is not complete, or it is incorrectly filled out Professional goals are missing Needs are missing or based on opinion and/or personal biases Unrealistic results Description missing or not understandable

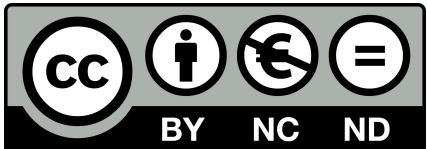| Artifact 3: Design | Activity design template is completely filled out | Activity design template is not completely filled out | Activity design template is not used |
	Activity design aligns to your identified needs	Activity design loosely aligns to your identified needs	Activity design does not align to your identified needs
	Activity design is actionable	Activity design is not actionable	Activity design is not actionable
Artifact 4: Evidence of Implementation	Three artifacts are submitted	Less than three artifacts are submitted	Less than three artifacts are submitted
	Artifacts are from implementation of plan	Artifacts are not related to implementation	Artifacts are not related to implementation
	All artifacts contain a description that includes: Time/Date Number of Participants Purpose of artifact and how it was used.	Artifact descriptions are missing key components	Artifact descriptions are not included
Artifact 5: Feedback from Participants	Two participants provided feedback	Only one participant provides feedback	No feedback provided
	Feedback is thoughtful and useful for self-reflection	Feedback may not be useful for self-reflection	

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 policy engagement and relationships 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 leaders 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.