

Building Distributive Leadership Capacity

Planning and Rollout

Driving Instructional Improvement

Reflecting and Making Adjustments

Lead Collaborative Teacher Teams

Who Is the Primary Audience for This Guide? **Senior/Team Leads and Team Specialists**

When Is This Guide Most Useful? **Beginning of the School Year**

Vision of Excellence

Collaborative teacher teams are at the heart of the distributive leadership model. Effective teacher leaders invest in the members of their team by building a strong vision and culture and developing team goals based on data. Collaborative teams that work well together are characterized by trust and vulnerability: Teachers make their practice public, share constructive feedback with one another and ask their peers for help. Team members feel a shared responsibility for students across their classrooms and have a laser-like focus on using data to improve teacher practice and student achievement.

Essential Questions

- How can teacher leaders best work with their teams to establish a culture of collaboration and collective responsibility?
- How do teacher leaders support teams in the creation of goals for student achievement and professional development?
- How do teacher leaders establish practices and plan for their teams to be successful and outcomes-oriented throughout the year?

Objective 1: Establish vision and culture for teacher teams

Key Action Steps

- ✓ **Set and refine team vision**
 - Draft a [teacher team vision](#), keeping in mind the school’s broader vision, team member subject area assignments and prior student performance.
 - Engage your team in a conversation around the draft vision, using a protocol to elicit feedback and make refinements. Provide copies to your team and revisit it regularly in team and individual conversations.
- ✓ **Clarify team-wide expectations and culture**
 - Finalize and share a preliminary schedule for teacher team meetings. Confirm expectations for participation and clarify optional and mandatory activities.
 - Collectively establish norms and/or commitments for all team interactions and meetings. Provide copies for each team member and revisit as needed in 1:1 or whole group conversations.
 - Discuss how you, as the team leader, will engage with team members, clarifying how collaborative team time is connected to individual learning cycles and broader school goals.
 - Discuss expectations with the team, gather input, and draft [Senior/Team Lead to teacher coaching agreements](#). Be sure to differentiate between expectations that are non-negotiable and those that can be adjusted person to person.



SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS

In one school, **Senior/Team Leads began to meet with their future teacher teams at the end of the school year**. They engaged in a “future protocol,” asking them to imagine themselves one year from now, and to respond to questions such as:

- ✓ What does it look like to receive good feedback? To have a strong team?
- ✓ How does our individual work connect to our school goals? Team goals?

The answers to these questions were used to shape the team vision and goals for the following school year.

Objective 2: Set Team Goals and Develop a Scope and Sequence for Professional Learning

Key Action Steps

- ✓ **Revisit school-wide goals with your team**
 - Discuss school-wide goals within the collaborative team and discuss how the work of the team aligns to these goals.
 - Invite a school leader to your collaborative team meeting to answer questions about the school-wide vision and goals.
- ✓ **Develop and refine Student Learning Objectives**
 - Follow district, network, and school guidance for the development of Student Learning Objectives.
- ✓ **Draft a scope and sequence for the teacher team and revise as needed**
 - Use a protocol to support the development and refinement of team learning goals. Connect goals to the LEAP framework and individual Professional Growth Plans.
 - Share your team goals with school leadership and invite feedback.
 - Draft a recommended list of areas for improvement, tying each to applicable LEAP indicators.
 - At an early team meeting, share the draft list with teachers for their feedback. Have teachers reflect on their own individual areas of development and incorporate themes into the teacher team scope and sequence.
 - Using the information gathered above, draft a [year-long scope and sequence](#) for the teacher team. Ensure it has an equal focus on data, observation and feedback, and professional learning and drives towards the school's improvement plan goals. Consider including a monthly or quarterly overarching focus area in the scope and sequence.
 - Set aside regular time to revisit the goals and scope and sequence with the teacher team, and with teachers individually, and make revisions as necessary to meet the needs of teachers and students.



MAKING
CONNECTIONS

The Department of Accountability, Research, & Evaluation (ARE) provides guidance related to SLOs.

Senior/Team Leads have found the information and resources at the ARE website to be particularly helpful in supporting their team to increase student achievement. In particular, they have benefitted from the following:

- ✓ An [SLO one-pager](#) that provides an overview of the process
- ✓ The [SLO wiki page](#) with sample SLOs in various content areas and grade levels
- ✓ A [Baseline Data and Preparedness Toolkit](#), which can be helpful during the first few weeks of school as teams create their SLOS

Objective 3: Establish Routines for Teacher Team Meetings

Key Action Steps

- ✓ **Develop routines for ongoing team meetings**
 - Revisit the school and team vision at the start of each meeting to remind team members of the larger purpose.
 - Provide an [agenda template](#) and ask team members to submit agenda items prior to meetings. Consider using Google Docs to collaboratively build the agenda. Ask team members to share in facilitation as appropriate.
 - Include regular agenda items on data updates, professional learning and general team questions.
 - Include short-term feedback mechanisms for team meetings (e.g., plus/delta or stop/start/continue protocol). Revisit feedback from previous meetings at the start of each session. Commit to doing quarterly step-backs to invite more detailed feedback.
- ✓ **Support teachers to engage with data**
 - Establish norms and expectations for examining student work as a team. Model the presentation and examination of student work from your classroom to build trust and establish a culture of risk-taking.
 - Use [Data-Driven Instruction protocols](#) and structures to make student work and assessment data regular components of team meetings.
- ✓ **Plan and implement professional learning**
 - Set up professional learning around focus areas outlined in the scope and sequence, adjusting as needed. Solicit and be open to professional learning requests from your team.

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- Collaborate with other Senior/Team Leads to plan differentiated professional development mini-sessions based on school-wide trends and areas of development. Consider recruiting teachers to plan and execute the sessions.
 - Have teachers bring data and/or artifacts (e.g., student work, scripted observation, teacher team data) and discuss. To focus the discussion, provide guiding questions that revolve around the focus areas outlined in the scope and sequence.
- ✓ **Support collaboration between team members**
- Provide informal collaboration and support opportunities inside and outside of team meetings. Consider offering consultancy or “office hour” times for team members to receive support from you or each other.
 - Ask team members to observe each other’s instruction and provide each other bite-sized feedback related to the goal the observed teacher is working towards.
 - Have teachers videotape themselves and trade videos with peers on their team. Provide teachers with a resource that offers [examples of actionable, bite-sized feedback](#) aligned to LEAP indicators.
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