



Application

70554 - Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System

73087 - Teachers Leading Teachers in Colo-NESCO Community School District

Teacher Leadership and Compensation System

Status: Under Review

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Program Area of Interest	Teacher Leadership and Compensation System		
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Use the drop-down menu to select the district name.

County-District Number 85-1359
This field should fill automatically based on the choice above. If the number listed does not match with the district selected, contact Tom Cooley at 515-281-4700.

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Abstract/ Executive Summary

Provide an overview of the school district's proposed Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) plan. This summary should highlight your vision and goals and describe how the primary components of the plan connect to one another. (5,000 characters maximum)

For several years Colo-NESCO Community School District has been working to transform itself into a district that prepares students for an ever-changing, challenging, exciting, and successful future. Implementation of a teacher leadership program will help us reach this goal. Our sense of urgency is real. Colo-NESCO is currently on the AYP watch-list in both reading and mathematics. We need to increase student achievement scores on standardized assessments, improve levels of growth on MAP assessments, and boost low levels of college-readiness. Additionally, as a small district surrounded by larger districts able to offer more in terms of salary and benefits, we need a system to recruit and retain high-quality teachers.

In planning for the grant we took great efforts to involve all stakeholder groups. The feedback we gained from these efforts, combined with research into successful teacher leadership systems throughout the country, enabled us to develop a plan that will empower teachers to become leaders and accelerate student achievement.

As a part of this process we determined that the district's current vision to empower all students to achieve their full potential could simply be extended teachers. A fully supported and implemented teacher leadership system will empower teachers to achieve **their** full potential and thus directly benefit students. Building off this vision we developed the following goals.

Goals

1. Improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers.
2. Fully support initial teachers as they enter the profession.
3. Provide aligned and differentiated professional development.
4. Establish new professional opportunities for teachers and monitor the effectiveness and professional growth of teachers in these positions.
5. Improve student achievement in all subject areas.

Included in our plan are five teacher leadership roles. The **TLC Coordinator/Instructional Coach** will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring implementation of the leadership system, providing coaching, and leading the planning and facilitation of professional learning. **Lead Teachers**, focused on the areas of literacy, math, and science, will invite teachers to observe their instruction, support teachers with co-planning and co-teaching, share professional resources, and collaborate on the planning and facilitation of professional development.

Professional Learning Community Leaders will guide PLC groups in studying student data and instructional strategies and support teachers engaging in peer observations. **Mentor Teachers** will support initial teachers through co-planning, analyzing data, providing demonstrations, as well as observing new teachers and providing constructive feedback. Finally, **Model Teachers** will open their classrooms for observations and lead the way in implementing initiatives and instructional strategies.

A selection committee made up of teachers and administrators will screen candidates for leadership positions. They will be asked to submit a resume, write responses to several questions, submit videos of their instruction and work with adults, and attend an interview.

The distributed leadership provided by this system will enable us to:

- Provide multiple entry points for teacher leaders.
- Collect data on the current state of instructional practices and use this to plan professional learning.
- Provide targeted, relevant, and differentiated professional learning opportunities in a variety of settings and with varied levels of support.
- Facilitate, monitor, and make adjustments to professional learning.

All six key district initiatives will be more effectively implemented with the support of a teacher leadership system. These include participation in the Collaborating for Iowa's Kids initiative, the Instructional Practices Inventory, implementation of the Iowa Core, Professional Learning Communities, mentoring and induction efforts, and peer review. Teacher leaders will provide the backbone of support as they work with teachers to achieve the aims of these initiatives and provide the professional development necessary to make them a success.

Another important component is the role teacher leaders will play in improving entry into the profession. The current mentoring and induction program, provided by Heartland AEA, will be supplemented with a district curriculum to personalize and contextualize their work. Mentor pairs will also be provided with a monthly substitute so they can meet, plan, observe, and reflect.

Careful monitoring of our teacher leadership system is key to its long-term success. To this end, will use a variety of methods including surveys, interviews, monthly monitoring meetings, learning walks, rubrics, and an analysis of student achievement.

Colo-NESCO will put in place several measures to sustain the program over time. We will:

- Continue open communication with stakeholders, update them on progress, and solicit their feedback.
- Hold monthly teacher leader meetings to allow for collaboration, professional growth, and feedback on potential improvements.
- Build in a system of planned turnover, which will enable us to build the capacity of all teachers in the district.
- Extend our partnership with Heartland AEA.

Our budget for the TLC Grant is primarily directed at covering the costs for teacher leaders to be out of the classroom, releasing teachers to collaborate, providing salary supplements to teachers taking on leadership roles, and supporting professional development.

Colo-NESCO Community School District is making great progress toward empowering **all** individuals to achieve their full potential.

Implementation of a teacher leadership system will enable us to consolidate and coordinate multiple initiatives and transform our district into truly world-class system.

Please select the TLC model number that most closely resembles your district plan.

TLC Model Number

Model 3 Comparable Plan

Narrative

Part 1) Describe the planning process used by the district to develop your Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) plan. (5,000 characters maximum) Please include the following information in your narrative:

- a) Description of how the planning grant and available planning time was used to develop a high-quality plan

- b) Description of how each stakeholder group (teachers, administrators, and parents) engaged in the process and contributed to the development of the plan

- c) Description of the support for and commitment to the plan from each stakeholder group (teachers, administrators, and parents)

Colo-NESCO's planning for the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) Grant was guided by Heartland AEA's workshop series. In these sessions we reviewed teacher leadership systems throughout the country, viewed presentations on aspects of effective teacher leadership systems, and were provided with planning documents and supports to use in the development of our teacher leadership system. As a follow up to these meetings, a district planning group met regularly to brainstorm, plan, and write sections of the grant. Meetings were held with administrators to solicit their input and feedback.

Additionally, district representatives attended a training session by Steve Barkley, a world-renowned educational consultant, about how to create, support, and maintain a strong teacher leadership program. Our instructional coach attended a three-day coaching conference to deepen our understanding of the roles and responsibility of teacher leaders, the skills necessary to be an effective teacher leader, and the infrastructure necessary to support a teacher leadership system. Finally, the lead writer for the grant was paid for time spent outside of the workday and several district teachers were paid to review the draft and provide feedback.

Administrators had a vital role in the development of the teacher leadership plan. Those not attending the AEA workshop series were briefed on the information presented and the scope and intended outcomes of a teacher leadership system. They provided input and feedback throughout the grant writing process, including how best to solicit input from teachers and community members, which leadership roles would be a best fit for their buildings and the district, and in determining the most appropriate duties and responsibilities for teacher leaders.

Initially administrators were on a continuum in terms of support for a teacher leadership system. All administrators were excited at the prospect of having an on-going, built-in system for ensuring the continual development and growth of teachers and the positive impact this would have on student achievement. Concern was expressed about the potentially negative effects of removing high-quality teachers from the classroom. After discussion the design of the system was adjusted so that, at least in the first year, the amount of time teacher leaders would be out of the classroom will be minimized. Also, it was decided that teacher leaders' release from instructional duties would be dependent on finding a suitable replacement. As a result **100% of administrators** are in support of implementing a teacher leadership system.

Teachers' input was actively sought and incorporated into the plan. Sessions were held in each building to inform teachers about the TLC Grant, its foundations, vision, and goals as well as the range of potential leadership roles. Teachers participated in a survey to quantify their support for a teacher leadership system, the roles they felt would be most beneficial, the types of teacher leaders they would be most likely to utilize, and which roles they might be interested in pursuing. This information was then used to design a system that would meet the unique needs of Colo-NESCO.

Teachers were very supportive, with **86% of the staff** in support of having a teacher leadership system. They felt that such a system would enable them to "broaden [their] career path," "grow professionally," allow them to "share best practices," "improve teacher instruction and collaboration," "tap into the multiple teacher talents that exist," and provide better support for new teachers, all of which would lead to increased student achievement. Some concern was expressed about teachers taking on yet more responsibilities and the possible detrimental effect of removing effective teachers from the classroom. Based on this input duties and responsibilities were adjusted to avoid overloading any one position.

A third stakeholder group that engaged in the process was parents and community members. Thirty parents and community members attended a meeting, which was 67% of those invited to attend. This meeting had two main purposes. First, we wanted to educate community members about what the TLC system was and how it would benefit the achievement of all students. Second, we wanted to present our draft plan and get input on the potential strengths and weakness so it could be adjusted based on their feedback.

As a result of this meeting **a majority of community members** expressed support for a teacher leadership system. According to the notes groups took and the minutes of the meeting, community members believe that a teacher leadership program will improve instruction for students, allow for better support and retention of new teachers, support vertical alignment of the curriculum, create a more open environment and the sharing of expertise, improve professional development and growth, and increase accountability. Their concerns closely mirrored those of administrators and teachers and related to the sustainability of such a system if funding runs out, how to keep additional responsibilities from increasing teacher burnout, and a desire to ensure that the application and review process is rigorous. This input led us to split one position into two separate positions to avoid burnout. We also increased the rigor of our selection process to ensure the most qualified candidates would be selected.

Because of the research conducted, extensive outreach efforts, and the valuable stakeholder feedback incorporated into the final design, we feel confident that Colo-NESCO has a strong plan for launching a teacher leadership program. Our program will support teacher growth, lead to higher student achievement, and allow the district to grow in ways that will meet the needs of the future.

Narrative

Part 2) Describe the vision and goals your school district hopes to achieve through the implementation of the TLC plan. (5,000 characters maximum)

In your description, please explain the local context (including relevant student achievement data and existing goals) and how the plan will be tailored to that context while also working toward the statewide goals of the system (attract able/promising new teachers; retain effective teachers; promote collaboration among teachers; reward professional growth and effective teaching; improve student achievement).

Colo-NESCO Community School District has been working to transform itself over the last several years. A number of initiatives have been implemented to this end. However, we are still facing an uphill battle. Our district needs an overlying structure that can coordinate the diverse elements necessary to recruit and retain highly effective teachers, promote collaboration and high-quality instruction, and increase student achievement. We believe full implementation of a teacher leadership system will do just this.

We have developed the following theory of action for our teacher leadership program.

If we actively engage teachers in leadership roles; fully support new teachers as they enter the profession; improve individual and collective practice; provide coherent and coordinated professional development; and monitor performance,

Then we will improve the overall quality of instruction; increase rates of student achievement, and **all individuals** will be empowered to achieve their full potential.

Colo-NESCO is a small, rural district with 528 students and 46 teaching staff. In the 2012-2013 school year, 35.7% of students received free or reduced lunch, 4.6% were minority students, 8.7% of students were identified with disabilities, and there were no ELL students.

The district's CSIP goals are that all K-12 students will achieve at high levels in reading, math, and science; to increase the percentage of students scoring proficient or above in these areas; and for students to show growth on MAP assessments.

Assessment data show a need to increase levels of proficiency. We are a Phase One school in the state's Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K) rollout and the data show that 64% of PK-4 students are meeting the required benchmarks. Both our elementary and secondary buildings are on the AYP watch list in the areas of reading and math. Iowa Assessment data reinforce the need to accelerate growth, especially when disaggregated by subgroup.

Percent of Proficient Students in Grades 3-11		
	All Students	Students with Disabilities
Free or Reduced Lunch	Minority Students	Reading
71.77%	14.28%	59.61%
50.00%	Math	77.41%
53.57%	67.30%	66.66%
Science	82.25%	60.71%

Clearly these numbers are concerning and more so when you consider that they have been falling over the last five years. Adding even more urgency is the fact that that only 42.42% of 11th graders are considered college ready in reading, 36.36% in math, and 33.33% in science.

For several years Colo-NESCO has had informal teacher leader positions to support district initiatives. Teachers have worked as district trainers and served on committees to help plan professional development. Each Professional Learning Community has a teacher who facilitates meetings and attends monthly facilitator sessions to ensure that PLC work is aligned throughout the district. Additionally, mentor teachers support new teachers in the district.

Recognizing both the need to increase levels of proficiency and the powerful positive potential of teacher leaders, the district took the proactive step of hiring an instructional coach for the 2013-2014 school year. The instructional coach supports teachers one-on-one and in small groups, plans and facilitates professional development, and leads the district's C4K implementation.

The hard work and dedication of these individuals is building momentum in the district. However, we still have a way to go. Implementing a teacher leadership system will enable us to:

- build the capacity of teachers to act as leaders,
- spread and improve instructional practices throughout the district,
- ensure full implementation of district initiatives,
- support and retain teachers, and
- positively impact student achievement.

Our teacher leadership team will support and strengthen teachers at all levels. They will work with teachers one-on-one, meet them in their zone of proximal development, and help them reflect and meet individual goals. They will lead Professional Learning Communities to allow teachers to collaborate and build best practices. They will plan, facilitate, and monitor professional development to ensure that instruction and curriculum is rigorous as well as vertically and horizontally aligned. And they will mentor initial teachers to ensure high-quality instruction right from the start. Our teacher leadership program will coordinate work that is currently dispersed throughout the district and recognize and reward teachers for work they are currently doing *pro bono*.

To accomplish this we have established the following goals:

1. Improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers.
2. Fully support initial teachers as they enter the profession.
3. Provide aligned and differentiated professional development.
4. Establish new professional opportunities for teachers and monitor the effectiveness and professional growth of teachers in these positions.
5. Improve student achievement in all subject areas.

Our district's vision is to empower students to achieve their full potential. Teachers work hard every day to make this vision a reality.

Implementing a teacher leadership program will work to ensure this is true for teachers as well.

Part 3) Describe how the TLC plan will connect to, support and strengthen the districts key school improvement structures, processes, and initiatives (e.g. RTI, K-3 Literacy, Iowa Core implementation, etc.). (5,000 characters maximum)

Colo-NESCO Community School District has several structures and initiatives that will be strengthened through the implementation of a teacher leadership system. Teacher leaders will support each initiative. This support will be differentiated based on teacher leader roles and existing teacher needs.

First, we are a Phase One school in the state's Collaborating for Iowa's Kids rollout. Through this process we are analyzing the effectiveness of our core instruction and the systems of support provided to students. We are using new assessments, implementing evidence-based interventions, monitoring progress, and using data to inform our decisions. Teacher leaders will support and strengthen this initiative by providing context-embedded examples of quality Tier 1 instruction and coaching teachers in the implementation of effective instructional strategies. They will also provide professional development to strengthen our instructional core and support the implementation of systems of support for students whose needs are not being met by the core curriculum.

A second initiative is the Instructional Practices Inventory. This is a teacher-led, collaborative process that quantifies how students are engaging in instruction. All classrooms are visited and engagement is categorized along a continuum. These data have shown us we rely heavily on teacher led instruction and need to increase the percentage of time students are engaged in higher-order, deeper thinking activities. Teacher leaders will provide professional development and serve as a model for how to effectively use and balance various instructional practices and incorporate higher-order, deeper thinking.

Third, implementing the Iowa Core is a district priority. Heartland AEA has provided professional development on understanding and unpacking the core and has supported teachers with initial implementation. Our instructional coach collaborated with teachers to provide additional professional learning. Teacher leaders will support this initiative by collaborating with peers, developing teacher skill at linking the Iowa Core to instruction, and strengthening practices that meet the rigorous standards outlined in the core. Additionally, they will provide professional development and model how to use district-provided resources to fully implement and integrate the Iowa Core.

Fourth, the district has instituted Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs focus on teaching and learning, student engagement, technology, and assessment. One teacher leads each group and attends monthly facilitator meetings to coordinate the content and direction of each group's work. PLCs serve as an engine for spreading positive practices, provide feedback about the current state of instruction, and collect data about district needs. Teacher leaders will facilitate PLCs to identify student learning needs, determine teachers' current knowledge and skills, and identify future learning opportunities. They will also be responsible for guiding collaboration, the discussion of student strengths and weaknesses, and group collection and analysis of data.

Fifth, new teachers participate in a two-year mentoring and induction program sponsored by Heartland AEA. The course builds new teachers' professional knowledge and guides them through their first year. Mentors and mentees jointly attend the second year where they collaboratively study teaching and learning. Mentor pairs meet weekly and document their work. Teacher leaders will support and strengthen this initiative by fostering reflective collaboration, encouraging change and growth, and supporting initial teachers' use of data. Release time will also be provided for observations and reflective dialogue. Finally, teacher leaders will work together to develop a local mentoring curriculum and continue to build their own knowledge of adult learning theory.

Sixth, teachers also participate in peer review. The goal of this initiative is to engage teachers in learning from each other and spread positive practices. Observations are done quarterly. Forms are provided for use prior to the observation, during the observation, and to aid in reflection afterwards. The intent of the reflection is to affirm positive practices and suggest areas that could be improved. In support of this initiative, teacher leaders will provide resources, model and support teaching strategies, and use a reflective process to strengthen teacher practice. A teacher leadership system will ensure that district initiatives are not adopted and then abandoned in the familiar "adopt, attack, abandon" cycle. One example of this is a past initiative to improve student engagement and higher order thinking skills – Project CRISS. After initial training, teachers were provided with implementation support through the use of district trainers and follow-up workshops. After three years of implementation, this initiative was pushed to the side by newer initiatives. Our data indicates that teachers and students were experiencing success with this initiative and are frustrated that it seems to have been left behind.

Additionally, in a small district with limited central office resources, initiatives can often be adopted; however, the necessary professional development and on-going support for full implementation and sustained use are not provided. Having a leadership structure that is composed of, and led by teachers will ensure that targeted, needs-based professional development is provided. They will support teachers in taking practices they learn about and see in model classrooms and implement them in their own instruction. This will be done through structured observations, demonstrations, co-planning, co-teaching, and reflective dialogue. In this way our teacher leadership system will create a multi-tiered system of support **for teachers** and ensure that the district's vision is being brought to life in a coherent and coordinated way.

Part 4) Describe how the TLC plan will utilize teacher leaders and the additional funding to improve entry into the teaching profession for new teachers. Include in your response an analysis of the effectiveness of the current induction and mentoring program, areas of improvement needed in the current program and how your TLC plan will address these gaps. (5,000 characters maximum)

Recent studies estimate that 40% to 50% of new teachers leave within their first five years. This fact is well known to most educators. Colo-NESCO Community School District must contend with this reality and the further reality that as a small, rural district we are limited in how much we can pay teachers. As a result, it is an even greater struggle to recruit and retain teachers when nearby districts can offer more in terms of salary and benefits.

Colo-NESCO has sought to improve its recruitment of teachers. The district has increased the number of practicum students and student teachers. We have begun using the new website *teachiowa.gov* to promote the unique qualities of teaching in our district...our 1-to-1 laptop initiative, our small class sizes, and a strong and supportive community. Although this has increased our visibility in the job market, we still do not receive the same number of applicants as larger districts. For this reason, improving entry into the teaching profession through a coordinated and supportive mentoring and induction program, and supporting teachers in their long-term professional growth, is vital to a successful future for Colo-NESCO.

Currently, Heartland AEA provides our mentoring and induction program. During the first year new teachers receive support on starting the year, building relationships and improving communication, classroom organization, best practices in teaching, effective use of data, differentiation, and the importance of being a reflective practitioner. In year-two, mentors and mentees attend together. They collaboratively study teaching and learning. The foci of the session include ensuring that all students achieve at high levels, standards-based unit design, assessment strategies and data analysis, and how to design effective and engaging learning experiences. In addition to these classes, the district requires mentors and mentees to meet weekly and document their work.

We have identified several gaps in our current mentoring and induction program and have developed the following measures to address them. The current program lacks a clear connection to the specific context in which our new teachers are working. Our teacher leadership system will fill this gap by providing local context and support. The teacher leadership team will work together to create a local mentoring and induction curriculum, including monthly topics to be addressed during mentoring meetings. The teacher leadership team will work with administrators to create and monitor expectations for mentors and mentees, including regular check-ins to monitor work and identify support to be provided. These actions will provide coherence and coordination and ensure mentees are receiving consistent information.

The current program is targeted at general education and does not always meet the needs of special education or other "specials" teachers. We will fill this gap by differentiating our support to target the specific positions of the teachers involved. This, combined with the local curriculum, will ensure that new teachers receive consistent, relevant, and timely support.

The largest gap noted by mentors and mentees was a lack of time, during the school day, to meet, plan, and conduct observations. Our proposed Mentor Teacher position does not have release time during the day. However, they will be able to use common planning time to collaborate. Additionally, they will be provided with monthly substitutes to cover their classrooms to make time for meetings, co-planning, observations, and reflective learning conversations.

Another gap we identified was the lack of additional days, outside the regular school calendar, for mentors and mentees to meet. To fill this gap, additional contract days will be used at the beginning of the year to help the mentor orient the mentee to the district and building. This time will be used for:

- reviewing policies, procedures, and handbooks,
- familiarizing new teachers with teaching materials,
- assisting new teachers with problem-solving,
- planning collaboration strategies to use with parents and staff, and
- providing time to work on setting up the classroom and starting the year off strong.

At the end of the year, additional days will provide time for structured reflection and how to use that learning to prepare for the upcoming year.

A fourth gap we identified was the need to support initial teachers in creating portfolios and preparing for their first year observations. Mentor Teachers, and our local mentoring curriculum, will provide timelines, resources, and strategies that can be used to support initial teachers with this work.

The fifth gap we identified was the need for more classrooms where initial teachers could observe high-quality instruction. Teacher leaders in the system will now provide additional observation sites where new teachers can observe, ask questions, and receive support on their implementation of instructional strategies.

The final gap we identified was related to the mentors themselves. In the past mentor teachers have been given limited professional development on how to work with and support initial teachers. Our teacher leadership system will provide Mentor Teachers with professional learning to develop their ability to facilitate constructive but challenging learning conversations, demonstrate effective teaching, use effective observation skills, provide constructive feedback, analyze and reflect on evidence of learning, and how to advocate on behalf of the mentee. Our teacher leadership system will build on the strong foundation provided by Heartland AEA and create district infrastructure that supports new teachers as they learn and grow in their first two years. This will improve entry into the profession and allow the district to recruit and retain a high-quality teaching force.

Narrative

Part 5) Describe each of the proposed teacher leadership roles in your plan. (10,000 characters maximum) Please include the following information in your narrative:

a)Description of the responsibilities and duties for each leadership role as well as the percentage of time each role will spend engaged in student instruction and the percentage of time each role will spend performing teacher leader duties.

b)Description of how each of the roles fit together to create a coherent instructional improvement strategy that will strengthen instruction and improve student learning and student achievement.

After conducting extensive outreach with various stakeholders, evaluating the needs of the district, and studying leadership systems throughout the country, we determined that five teacher leadership roles would be a part of our program design. The administrative team, along with the current instructional coach, worked to map out which duties and responsibilities would be best suited to each role.

TLC Coordinator / Instructional Coach (1 position)
Engages 50% in instructional coaching and 50% in the coordination of the TLC program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 additional contract days • \$15,000 supplement
Role Summary
Duties/Responsibilities
The TLC Coordinator will contribute to the growth of the district by overseeing implementation of the teacher leadership system. S/he will serve as the liaison between teacher leaders and the administrative team to ensure ongoing, two-way communication.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate the work of teacher leaders. • Plan, facilitate, and monitor professional learning for teacher leaders. • Assist teacher leaders in self-assessing effectiveness and professional growth. • Lead monthly teacher leader meetings to solicit feedback and enhance communication within the system. • Coordinate systematic data collection related to the teacher leadership system. • Share feedback and data with district leaders to plan adjustments to the system.
The Instructional Coach will contribute to district-wide growth by engaging teachers in a cycle of reflective professional development to bring about improvement in teacher skill and student achievement.
To this end, s/he will support teachers in selecting goals, identifying and implementing strategies to meet goals, monitoring progress toward goals, and reflecting on new learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct preliminary discussions with teachers to determine a coaching focus. • Create an action plan for improvement with the teacher. • Provide in class support through demonstrations, co-planning, co-teaching, and observations. • Facilitate reflective dialogue with the teacher to consolidate new understandings, identify anticipated changes in teaching practices and student behaviors, and identify possible next steps. • Be current on research-supported best practices. • Assist colleagues in advancing their instructional skills by providing resources and feedback. • Collaborate with district leaders and colleagues to address instructional issues. • Lead the planning, facilitation, and monitoring of district-wide professional learning.

Lead Teacher (3 positions)
Engages 70% in student instruction and 30% in teacher leadership duties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 additional contract days • \$8,000 supplement
Role Summary
Duties/Responsibilities
Lead Teachers will enhance professional growth in the district through their support of teachers in the classroom and in professional development settings. They will serve as the liaison between classroom teachers and district leaders to ensure decisions are informed by open communication.
Lead Teachers are responsible for guiding district work in literacy, math, and science. To this end, they will lead data-based inquiry, guide colleagues to make informed instructional decisions, support effective instructional practices, and cultivate collaboration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and demonstrate instructional strategies. • Support implementation of instructional strategies through demonstrations, observations, co-planning, and co-teaching. • Facilitate discussions about improving instructional practices. • Assist colleagues in advancing their instructional skills by providing resources and feedback. • Provide leadership in the collection and analysis of data. • Model and support the integration of technology. • Support the vertical alignment of curriculum. • Be current on research-supported best practices. • Collaborate with school leaders and colleagues to address instructional issues. • Assist in planning, facilitating, and monitoring staff development.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) Leader (7 positions)
Engages 100% in student instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 additional contract days • \$4,000 supplement
Role Summary
Duties/Responsibilities
<p>PLC Leaders will enhance professional growth in the district through their guidance of Professional Learning Communities. They will provide a channel for ongoing communication between PLCs, teacher leaders, and administrators.</p> <p>PLC Leaders are responsible for ensuring the work of PLCs centers on teaching and learning, student engagement, technology, and assessment. To this end, they will keep the focus on the district's four key questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What do we expect students to learn?</i> 2. <i>How will we know when they've learned it?</i> 3. <i>How will we respond when they don't?</i> 4. <i>How will we deepen the learning for students who have already mastered essential knowledge and skills?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide collaboration of team members. • Lead discussions of strengths and weaknesses of student performance. • Support team in identifying student learning needs. • Facilitate discussions about improving instructional practices. • Support group collection and analysis of data. • Organize and support teachers engaged in peer observation. • Be current on research-supported best practices. • Work with instructional coach to determine the types of learning opportunities teachers' need. • Collaborate with school leaders and colleagues to address instructional issues.

Mentor Teacher (5 positions)
Engages 100% in student instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 additional contract days • \$3,000 supplement
Role Summary
Duties/Responsibilities
<p>Mentor Teachers contribute to the growth of the district through their mentoring and support of initial teachers. They also serve as a liaison between new teachers, the teacher leadership system, and administrators.</p> <p>Mentor Teachers are responsible for supporting improved entry into the profession. To this end, they will act as a critical friend, listening and supporting the new teacher, but also ensuring their focus is on the teaching and learning cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate effective classroom instruction. • Facilitate learning conversations. • Assist initial teachers with planning. • Provide constructive feedback to new teachers. • Facilitate mentee's reflection on the feedback they receive. • Assist the initial teacher in the collection and analysis of data. • Support the mentee in making data-based decision and planning for differentiation. • Be current on research-supported best practices. • Collaborate with school leaders and colleagues to address instructional issues.

Model Teacher (3 positions)
Engages 100% in student instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 additional contract days • \$2,000 supplement
Role Summary
Duties/Responsibilities

Model Teachers contribute to professional growth in the district by providing examples of high quality instruction and inviting others to observe their instruction.

Model Teachers are responsible for maintaining a high-level of instructional practice and implementing district initiatives.

- Maintain exemplary level of teaching practice.
- Invite initial and career teachers into their classroom for observations.
- Maintain a log of observations.
- Host student teachers and interns.
- Videotape instruction three times each quarter.
- Upload and tag videos in the district's searchable database.
- Be current on research-supported best practices.
- Collaborate with school leaders and colleagues to address instructional issues.

Colo-NESCO views the teacher leadership system first and foremost as a capacity building tool. Research indicates that a teacher's knowledge and skills grow as a result of working in a teacher leadership role. Additionally, research suggests that teachers learn from other effective teachers in their school and are more likely to raise student achievement when surrounded by effective colleagues.

Our teacher leadership systems creates multiple entry points for teachers, ranging from those with relatively few leadership responsibilities to those with significant leadership duties. This will allow teachers an opportunity to enter the system at the level they feel most comfortable and that best matches their current skills and abilities. It will also provide them with time to develop leadership skills. Because positions will re-open at the end of each year, teachers will be able to decide if they want to continue, take on additional leadership responsibilities, or return to the classroom. Additionally, contracts for teacher leadership roles will explicitly state that after three years of service the preference is for a rotation of roles. This rotation will be managed to ensure that some existing teacher leaders remain in each position to ensure continuity and to carry the institutional memory for the team. In this way we will sustain the system over time and build the strength of the entire district.

These roles work to create a coherent instructional improvement strategy by ensuring that teachers receive professional learning that is in their zone of proximal development. Recognizing that not all teachers learn in the same way and at the same pace, differentiated opportunities will be provided in a variety of settings.

The Instructional Coach will provide opportunities for one-on-one instructional coaching that focuses on four main areas: content planning, assessment and evaluation, instructional strategies, and community building/classroom management. Other teacher leaders will also provide individual support:

- Lead Teachers will provide content area expertise and support based on individual needs and goals.
- Mentor teachers will work individually with new teachers as they navigate their first two years.
- Model teachers will provide opportunities for teachers to observe practices they are working to implement in their own classrooms.

Small group professional learning will also be provided. The Instructional Coach and Lead Teachers will be available to work with grade levels or small interest/needs-based groups. PLC Leaders will facilitate Professional Learning Communities as they discuss and evaluate student growth and teachers' use of instructional strategies.

Finally, all teacher leaders will support whole group professional learning. The Instructional Coach will work with administrators and other teacher leaders to evaluate teacher data and plan professional learning opportunities. The teacher leadership team will facilitate these sessions. All sessions will include feedback opportunities for staff to evaluate the perceived relevance and effectiveness of the professional development. Learning from whole-staff professional development can then be tailored, reinforced, and followed-up on in small-group and individual settings. District leaders will then monitor implementation to provide additional data for planning future professional learning.

To ensure the quality and coherence of the learning opportunities provided by teacher leaders, the TLC Coordinator/Instructional Coach will organize the professional learning of teacher leaders. This will occur during monthly meetings and during teacher leaders' additional contract days. Time will be used for collaboration, data analysis, reflection, planning, and professional development targeted at classroom practice, adult learning theory, and leadership skills.

When brought together these roles create a coherent improvement strategy that empowers teachers to take on new levels of leadership and responsibility. This system will create more rigorous teaching **and** learning throughout the district.

Part 6) Describe how teacher leaders will be selected. (5,000 characters maximum) Please include descriptions of how the district will determine and evaluate the following in selecting teacher leaders:

a)Measures of effectiveness

b)Professional growth

For Colo-NESCO Community School District's teacher leadership program to be successful, it is necessary to find teachers who demonstrate strong teaching practices, reflectiveness about their instructional practice, a commitment to ongoing professional growth, a desire to serve as a leader, and a willingness to learn the habits and practices of teacher leaders – even if they do not currently possess them. For this reason, our selection process will examine each candidate from multiple perspectives.

The positions will be posted with information about the minimum requirements – including at least three years of teaching experience and one year of experience in the district. Information will also be included about the duties and responsibilities, extra workdays, salary supplements, and the requirement to complete an annual review of the assignment. A selection committee, composed of an equal number of teachers and administrators, will accept applications, screen for potential candidates, conduct interviews, and make recommendations regarding the final selection of candidates.

Candidates will be asked to submit a resume. This resume will be screened for evidence that the individual has continued their growth as a professional and sought out leadership opportunities in the past. We will look for evidence of professional development, conferences attended, progress made toward earning additional certifications or degrees, involvement in professional organizations, and any leadership roles the teacher has previously assumed.

The candidate will also be asked to submit written responses to several questions. These questions will seek to evaluate the candidate's written communication and understand their philosophy as an educator and leader. The aim is to ensure that they have a strong teaching pedagogy, are a reflective practitioner, and understand the essential skills of teacher leaders including, collaboration, relationship building, and being a positive voice for change while working with resistance to that change.

Candidates will either submit a video of their teaching practice or select a time to be observed by members of the selection committee. This observation will focus on the teacher's classroom practice. Specifically, we will look to see that the candidate can create a well-crafted lesson plan, effectively engage students, differentiate instruction, flexibly use a variety of teaching strategies, provide precise and relevant feedback, and monitor and assess student learning.

The candidate will also be asked to submit a video of them working with a colleague. This can be in a one-on-one or group context, as long as the outcome is the professional growth of the teacher(s) they are working with. Here we will look for evidence of how the candidate planned for the session, the relationship they have established, the quality of the questions they ask, how they craft responses based on what was said, and their skill at presenting and explaining information.

Finally, candidates will be asked to attend an interview. The interview will first seek to evaluate the candidate's teaching practices, which are essential to the legitimacy and effectiveness they will have as a teacher leader. Included in this will be inquiry into how the teacher has sought to continue to learn and grow as an educator. Second, the interview will seek to understand the candidate as a leader. What leadership roles have they assumed in the past, why are they interested in a leadership role at this time, how do they envision themselves as a leader, and how can they work with other leaders to move the district forward? The final portion of the interview will be a mock professional development scenario where the candidate will be asked to guide the interview committee through a short example of professional learning.

Two lenses will be applied throughout the interview – (1) does the candidate give evidence that they are a reflective practitioner and (2) are they themselves coachable? Knowing that finding “fully-formed” candidates is unlikely, especially during initial implementation of a teacher leadership program, we will instead seek to find candidates who possess the ability and habits of mind to learn and grow **into** the position.

Using the dynamic and multifaceted system above we will gain a complete view of the teacher and their potential as a teacher leader.

Narrative

Part 7) Describe how the TLC plan will utilize teacher leaders to improve the districts current professional development program. (5,000 characters maximum) Please include the following information in your narrative:

a)Description of the role teacher leaders will play in the creation and delivery of professional development.

b)Description of how the districts TLC plan aligns with and incorporates the key elements of the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM).

[Click here To access the Iowa Professional Development Model page.](#)

One of the operating principles of the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM) is that **leadership must be distributed** if it is to be truly effective. Our teacher leadership system design takes this principle to heart by making teacher leaders the backbone of our professional development system.

Teacher leaders, with guidance from administrators and the Professional Learning & Leadership team, will be primarily responsible for planning and implementing professional development. Although not all teacher leaders will be responsible for the delivery of professional development, their input and expertise will be sought and utilized. They will use the IPDM Cycle of Professional Development in their planning for professional development and as a guide for their work with teachers.

Teacher leaders will **collect and analyze data** on the current state of instructional practices in the district through teacher observations, data collected from walk-throughs and the Instructional Practices Inventory, feedback from teachers, and student achievement data. These data will then be used to **set explicit goals** for professional development. Based on both data and goals, **content for professional development will be selected** while adhering to the requirements of the district's guiding principles of professional learning. These are:

- Maintains the focus of professional learning on student learning and operates on the belief that all students can and will learn.
- Respects and nurtures the diverse intellectual, reflective, and leadership capacity of each individual in our schools.
- Includes multiple, diverse perspectives to strengthen the organization and improve decision-making.
- Is planned, implemented, and evaluated collaboratively.
- Is embedded, ongoing, and sustainable at the district and site levels, and differentiated where appropriate.
- Utilizes best available research and data.

Our **design process** seeks to recognize that not all teachers learn in the same way. Our teacher leaders will provide differentiated levels professional development including one-on-one, small group, and whole group opportunities. The state's cycle of professional development will guide the work teacher leaders do in all settings.

The **Instructional Coach** will provide support at two levels. S/he will be responsible for guiding the professional development of teacher leaders and, with the support of the curriculum director, will lead the planning, facilitation, and monitoring of professional development in the district. S/he will also provide one-on-one and small group coaching for teachers throughout the district that focuses on classroom practice, instructional dialogue, and reflection.

Lead Teachers will serve as content area experts and technology integrationists. They will provide demonstrations and observations as well as opportunities for co-planning and co-teaching. Additionally, they will be in the classroom 70% of the time so their classrooms will serve as open observation sites and in-district laboratories for implementing new strategies.

PLC Leaders will provide leadership during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. During PLCs, teachers will have opportunities to plan, problem solve, develop materials and lessons, and engage in peer coaching. PLCs will focus on the areas of teaching and learning, student engagement, technology, and assessment. Four critical questions will be examined:

1. What do we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know when they've learned it?
3. How will we respond when they don't?
4. How will we deepen the learning for students who have already mastered essential knowledge and skills?

Model Teachers will provide a venue where all teachers can observe high-quality instruction and the implementation of key district initiatives and instructional strategies. This will meet the mandate called for in the IPDM for all teachers to have multiple opportunities to see demonstrations.

All professional development opportunities will be **evaluated to measure their effectiveness**. This will take the form of observations and direct feedback from staff. We will also monitor the level of teacher implementation and the resulting impact on student achievement. This information will allow us to make both mid- and end-course adjustments to our professional development delivery.

Another vital role for teacher leaders is related to the IPDM's operating principle of **simultaneity**. In the past, it has been a challenge for the district to maintain previous initiatives while implementing new ones. The result has been a feeling among teachers that initiatives will come and go and that they should just keep moving forward with the status quo. The teacher leadership system will provide a venue for vetting both past and present initiatives to make sure they have a history of success in our current areas of need and are research based. They will also support teachers in making connections between initiatives and seeing how they build on and support one another. Finally, teacher leaders will work to ensure that past strategies and initiatives are maintained and strengthened over time.

Using teacher leaders will enable the district to provide coherent, coordinated, high-quality professional development in a variety of settings and with varying levels of support to meet the needs of teachers and the high standards laid out in the Iowa Professional Development Model.

Part 8) Given the state and school district goals, please provide the following information: (5,000 characters maximum)

a) Description of how the district will determine the impact/effectiveness of the TLC Plan, including short-term and the long-term measures.

b) Description of how the district will monitor and adjust the TLC plan based on the results of these measures.

Careful monitoring of our teacher leadership system is key to its long-term success. Just as teachers use feedback to determine next steps for instruction, our system will use feedback to make both short and long-term adjustments.

Goal 1: Improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers.

First, we will monitor current recruitment efforts to determine which yield the largest number of high-quality candidates. Based on this analysis we will decide if we need to continue with current efforts or expand into other areas. Second, we will survey student teachers and interns to determine the likelihood that they will seek future employment in the district. Third, we will conduct annual staff climate surveys to determine which components most affect teacher satisfaction. Fourth, we will conduct exit interview with teachers leaving the district and create a system to track overall retention rates. Implementation of these measures will create a more complete picture of factors impacting retention and allow us to make necessary adjustments.

Goal 2: Fully support initial teachers as they enter the profession.

First, we will monitor the support being given to initial teachers by auditing mentoring logs to ensure required topics are being addressed. Second, we will conduct monthly meetings to monitor implementation progress and collect feedback to determine which supports are proving effective and which need to be adjusted or reinforced. Third, we will analyze bi-annual survey results to decide which program elements are most effective, which need adjustment, and which need to be replaced. Finally, we will review initial teacher observations and portfolios for evidence of the impact of mentoring. Based on this evidence we will adjust the system to alter the levels and types of support being provided to new teachers.

Goal 3: Provide aligned and differentiated professional development.

First, we will conduct biannual staff surveys to collect feedback on the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities. Second, we will conduct learning walks to monitor implementation of the knowledge and skills acquired in professional development, coaching sessions, classroom observations, and Professional Learning Communities. This information will be linked back to the specific professional development contexts to measure their effectiveness. Finally, results from the Instructional Practices Inventory will provide evidence of changes in instructional practice. Based on these data we can make changes to, and adjust the availability of, each type of professional development.

Goal 4: Establish new professional opportunities for teachers and monitor the effectiveness and professional growth of these teachers.

First, teacher leaders and administrators will complete a teacher leadership rubric to monitor the quality of instruction in teacher leaders' classrooms, their ability to coach other staff, their skill at facilitating professional learning, and their developing leadership abilities. Using this rubric we will determine how the teacher leader is growing professionally and be able to determine the impact they are having on instruction. Data from this rubric will also be used to plan professional development for teacher leaders.

Second, we will conduct biannual staff surveys to collect feedback on the effectiveness of teacher leaders. These surveys will tell us who is utilizing teacher leaders and their perceived strengths and weaknesses. This feedback will be used to determine what professional development teacher leaders need and what adjustments the system needs. Teacher leaders will also receive survey results so they can make modifications to their practice.

Teacher leaders will also provide feedback on the system through monthly meetings. In order to avoid frustration or burnout we need to know if too much responsibility is being placed on any teacher leader position. Once data has been collected we can adjust either the number of positions or responsibilities of the positions.

Finally, teacher leaders will use the Woodruff scale to measure the impact they are having on instructional practices. In the short term, this information can be used to look for patterns, successes, and difficulties. It will help determine if teacher leaders are increasing implementation and facilitating positive change. It can also be used to adjust day-to-day work and suggest next steps. In the long-term these data can measure the effectiveness of the system by analyzing which teacher leader roles are having the most impact. This will suggest what changes need to be made in future years.

Goal 5: Improve student achievement in all subject areas.

A 2010 report concluded that research documenting the impact of teacher leaders on classroom practices and student achievement is still emerging, but does appear to be promising. Therefore, gains in student achievement will be correlated with data about our teacher leadership system and considered in determining the impact and effectiveness of our system, but will not be the most heavily weighted method. The report also concluded that the length of time a teacher leadership system was in place was related to higher reading test scores. This suggests that the benefits of a teacher leadership system should accrue over time. Consequently, we would anticipate student achievement gains related to our teacher leadership program to increase over time.

By creating a system with a multifaceted feedback loop, we can use the information garnered to provide us with a holistic understanding of the current state of our teacher leadership program, weaknesses we need to mitigate, and strengths we can build on.

Part 9) Describe the school districts capacity to implement the TLC plan and what the district will do to sustain it over time. If you intend to partner with another district or an AEA to implement your plan, please describe that partnership in this section. (5,000 characters maximum)

Colo-NESCO Community School District is ready and able to launch a teacher leadership program. We have laid the groundwork for successful implementation and have made plans to address any gaps that currently exist.

This year the district took the proactive step of hiring an instructional coach. This was in response to a need to increase student achievement, urgency prompted by our status on the AYP watch-list, and knowledge of the powerful positive potential of teacher leaders. This prior commitment to implementing a teacher leadership system in the district will benefit us in several ways.

First, teachers are now familiar with the types of work teacher leaders do and the impact they can have. Although new teacher leaders will still need to dedicate time to building trust and relationships, initial staff questions and resistance to teacher leaders have been addressed. Second, the instructional coach has begun to build a teacher leadership foundation, in terms of expectations, experiences, and resources that new teacher leaders can build on.

District infrastructure will also support implementation. The district currently uses a web-based application to conduct walk-throughs and teacher evaluations. This program can be tailored to include our teacher leader rubric to assist in the evaluation of teacher leaders and the program as a whole. Our calendar for next year increases the amount of professional development time and includes whole day in-services as well as weekly early-outs. The addition of teacher leaders will ensure these efforts are relevant, coordinated, and meaningfully connected to district goals and teacher needs.

Stakeholder input in the planning process was instrumental in the creation of our program and we plan to continue this collaboration as we move forward. We will utilize our School Improvement Advisory Committee to keep the community informed of the progress of our teacher leadership system and to solicit feedback. We will use feedback we receive to make adjustments to the system. Also, whole staff and Professional Learning Community meetings will allow us to keep teachers informed about decisions being made, progress toward goals, and the resolution of problems that arise. Feedback from these meetings, as well as planned biannual surveys, will enable us to make adjustments to ensure the leadership systems is meeting the needs of students and teachers, which will help sustain it over time.

Monthly meetings will provide opportunities for teacher leaders to collaborate. These meetings will serve as a venue for preparing teachers for their new roles and supporting them as they progress. As a group they will work to deepen and broaden their knowledge of content, instructional learning theory, adult learning theory, and leadership theory. Time will also be dedicated to sharing successes, solving problems, and making improvements to the overall system.

Teacher turnover must be anticipated as well. We do not view this as a weakness but as a strength. Research indicates that a teacher's knowledge and skills grow as a result of working in a leadership role. Additionally, research suggests that teachers learn from other effective teachers in their schools and are more likely to raise student achievement when surrounded by effective colleagues. Anticipating and building a plan for guided turnover of positions will allow us to build the overall capacity of the district. Our contract for the positions will include a clause that incumbent candidates may reapply, but after three years of service, the preference is for a rotation of roles.

Sustaining the funding necessary to maintain such a program is more difficult. However, as one school board member noted, it would take only a modest increase in student enrollment to sustain such funding. Implementing our teacher leadership program will increase the effectiveness of teachers. This in turn will raise student achievement and make the district more attractive to families. As the program grows and becomes an essential part of the district, we are confident the necessary funds will be found.

We also recognize that we cannot do it all alone. Colo-NESCO has received invaluable support from, and developed a powerful partnership with, Heartland AEA. To support our teacher leadership system we will extend this partnership in several ways. We will continue to rely on them for their content expertise and professional development. However, as our teacher leaders build their skill set we anticipate needing them less for in-district professional development. One area where our partnership will be critical is in the support and professional development of our teacher leaders, especially in the early stages. We will need Heartland AEA's expertise and support in developing the capacity of teachers to fulfill the responsibilities of the various teacher leadership roles.

A second area in which we will continue to partner with Heartland AEA is by having new teachers attend their two-year mentoring and induction program. The program is a strong one that, with the support of a teacher leadership system, we will contextualize and strengthen.

Finally, we will continue our partnership with Heartland AEA in the area of cross-district collaboration. Just as teachers need to collaborate to learn and grow, so do districts. Heartland AEA provides a rich context in which districts can learn from each other and problem solve together. We anticipate Heartland AEA bringing together districts implementing a teacher leadership program so we can benefit from each other's experiences.

We recognized the challenges of implementing and sustaining a teacher leadership program. However, we are confident that the groundwork we have laid, the infrastructure we have in place, and the communication, feedback, and collaborative systems we have planned will work together to ensure the success of our teacher leadership program.

Grant Allocation

*Enter the district enrollment as reported on Line 7 of the **2013** Certified Enrollment Report. The number entered is subject to verification by the DE. To enter the district's certified enrollment number, select "Edit" at the top of the screen. Once the enrollment field is completed, select "Save" to view the Grant Allocation. Then enter the Budget Items and Other Budget Uses in the space provided.*

Certified Enrollment Number	528.0
<i>The district enrollment-based allocation is equal to the certified enrollment number x \$308.82.</i>	
District Enrollment-Based Allocation	\$163,056.96
Total Allocation	\$163,056.96

Part 10 - Budget Items

Use of TLC Funds	Amount Budgeted
Amount used to raise the minimum salary to \$33,500	\$0.00
Approximate amount designated to fund the salary supplements for teachers in leadership roles	\$88,000.00
Amount to cover the costs for the time teachers in leadership roles are not providing direct instruction in a classroom and to cover the costs when teachers are out of their classroom to observe or co-teach with another teacher (e.g. hiring emeritus, part-time, or full-time teachers)	\$59,500.00
Amount used to provide professional development related to the leadership pathways	\$11,500.00
Amount used to cover other costs associated with the approved teacher leadership and compensation plan. <i>These costs must be itemized and described below and be approved by the Iowa Department of Education prior to implementation of your plan.</i>	\$4,000.00
Totals	\$163,000.00

Other Budgeted Uses - Description

Item description	Amount budgeted
TLC Operating Budget - materials, presenters, and professional resources	\$4,000.00
	\$4,000.00

Total Allocation Budgeted

Total Projected Amount to be Expended	\$163,000.00
<i>If the amount shown below is (negative), the sum total of the dollar amounts budgeted exceeds the enrollment-based allocation.</i>	
Remaining Allocation to be Budgeted	\$56.96

Budget Alignment

Describe how the TLC Budget is aligned to the school districts goals for the proposed teacher leadership and compensation system. (5,000 characters maximum)

Colo-NESCO Community School District's theory of action for our teacher leadership program is:

If we actively engage teachers in leadership roles; fully support new teachers as they enter the profession; improve individual and collective practice; provide coherent and coordinated professional development; and monitor performance,

Then we will improve the overall quality of instruction; increase rates of student achievement, and **all individuals** will be empowered to achieve their full potential.

All funds received from the grant will be used to bring this theory of action to life.

Because the district already provides a **minimum salary** of more than \$33,500 we can direct the money toward other areas. A major portion of the funds will be allocated to **cover the costs for the time teacher leaders are out of their classrooms working with teachers**. We anticipate needing to hire one additional teacher to cover the time our Lead Teachers will be released to perform leadership duties. This funding, and the release time it provides, will allow us to provide one-on-one support to teachers, build the capacity of teacher leaders, and enable the leadership team to collaboratively plan and monitor professional learning for the district.

Teacher Leadership and Compensation Grant funds will also be used to provide monthly substitutes for mentor/mentee pairs. This will allow for additional collaboration and provide time for Mentor Teachers to directly support initial teachers through observations, demonstrations, co-planning, and reflection. Finally, this money will allow us to hire substitutes so we can release teams of teachers to collaborate, grow professionally, and plan for the implementation of high-quality instruction.

Another major portion of the grant will be used to fund the **salary supplements** for teachers in leadership roles. Historically, there have been very few avenues for teachers to advance in their profession while staying in the classroom. This meant that one of the only options was to pursue an administrative position. Salary supplements will allow us to fight against this flight from the classroom by providing the means to reward teachers who have demonstrated professional growth and effective teaching, and whom are willing to take on leadership responsibilities.

As a small, rural district Colo-NESCO is also limited in how much we can pay teachers, but are surrounded by districts that can offer more in terms of salary and benefits. Salary supplements will provide an avenue for increasing teacher compensation and encourage the retention of teachers willing to take on leadership responsibilities.

The supplements will be distributed on the basis of the amount of leadership responsibility teachers are taking on. The highest proportion will go to the TLC Coordinator/Instructional Coach and lowest will go to the Model Teacher. Each teacher leader role also has a requirement for extra days – which the supplements will cover. These days, both before and after the school year, will be used for planning, professional development, and reflection.

The remainder of the funds will be used to support the professional growth of teachers. This money will allow teacher leaders to attend conferences, purchase materials such as professional books for small and large group book studies, and supply other resources teacher leaders may need. The TLC system will also be provided with an operating budget to purchase materials, bring in speakers and presenters, and build a professional library for the district.

The best way to ensure our teacher leadership system has the greatest possible impact is to direct funds toward encouraging the retention and professional growth of teachers and teacher leaders. Our budget holds true to these priorities.

Assurances

Please check each of the boxes below. Your plan will not be considered for approval unless each of the boxes are checked, indicating your agreement to meet these requirements.

Minimum Salary The school district will have a minimum salary of \$33,500 for all full-time teachers. **Yes**

Selection Committee The selection process for teacher leadership roles will include a selection committee that includes teachers and administrators who shall accept and review applications for assignment or reassignment to a teacher leadership role and shall make recommendations regarding the applications to the superintendent of the school district. **Yes**

Teacher Leader Percentage The district will demonstrate a good-faith effort to attain participation by 25 percent of the teacher workforce in teacher leadership roles beyond the initial and career teacher levels. **Yes**

Teacher Compensation A teacher employed in a school district shall not receive less compensation in that district than the teacher received in the school year preceding implementation of the districts TLC plan. Yes

Applicability the framework or comparable system shall be applicable to teachers in every attendance center operated by the school district. Yes