

Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation

Final Report



Senate File 2284

Iowa Department of Education

Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146



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Senate File 2284

The Iowa Legislature established a Teacher Performance, Compensation, and Career Development Task Force in Senate File 2284 and provided the following charge:

1. The director of the department of education shall appoint, and provide staffing services for, a teacher performance, compensation, and career development task force to develop recommendations for a new teacher compensation system to replace the current teacher compensation system which addresses, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. Duties and responsibilities of apprentice, career, mentor, and master teachers.
 - b. Utilizing retired teachers as mentors.
 - c. Strategic and meaningful uses of finite resources and the realignment of resources currently available.
 - d. Mechanisms to substantially increase the average salary of teachers who assume leadership roles within the profession.
 - e. Standardizing implementation of task force recommendations in all of Iowa's school districts and public charter schools.
2. The task force shall also propose a peer coaching pilot project to expand excellence in the teaching profession. The proposal shall include recommendations for peer coaching criteria goals, strategies, documentation of progress, incentives for participation, and program evaluation.

While Senate File 2284 established the task force in Iowa Code, the group initially was established on February 15, 2012, as the Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation.

A blueprint for education released by the Branstad-Reynolds administration in October 2011 included plans to redesign educator career pathways, to create teacher leadership roles, and to revise the compensation structure to support this new educator career structure. Because changes that involve compensation in education generate large cost implications and many questions, the Branstad-Reynolds administration's final recommendations for world-class schools called for a task force to study the career structure and compensation plan in 2012. The group's work began before the end of the legislative session because of the importance of moving forward on these issues.

Task Force Membership

Teresa Bellinghausen, Heartland AEA/Professional Learning and Leadership Consultant, Johnston

Connie Boesen, Des Moines Public Schools/Board Member, Des Moines

Molly Boyle, Waukee Community School District/Third-Grade Teacher, Waukee

Mary Jane Cobb, Iowa State Education Association/Executive Director, Des Moines

Mike Cormack, Iowa Department of Education/Policy Liaison, Des Moines

Tom Downs, Iowa Association of School Boards/Executive Director, Des Moines

Paul Gausman, Sioux City Community School District/Superintendent, Sioux City

Jason Glass, Chair, Iowa Department of Education/Director, Des Moines

Jessica Gogerty, Roosevelt High School/School Improvement Leader¹, Des Moines

Jodie Graham, Ankeny High School/Assistant Principal², Ankeny

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Julie Heller, Central High School/Behavior Interventionist, Davenport

Kent Henning, Grand View University/President, Des Moines

Angie Jandrey, Mount Pleasant Community School District/Kindergarten Teacher, Mount Pleasant

Ann Lebo, Grundy Center High School and Hawkeye Community College/English Teacher, Grundy Center

Duane Magee, Iowa Board of Educational Examiners/Executive Director³, Des Moines

Mike May, Businessman⁴, Spirit Lake

¹ North High School/ School Improvement Leader at time of appointment to task force

² Humboldt Middle School/ Principal at time of appointment to task force

³ Waukee Community School District/ Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at time of appointment to task force

⁴ Also current State Board of Education member and retired teacher

Isaiah McGee, Iowa Department of Education/Program Consultant, Des Moines

Kent Mick, Corwith-Wesley-LuVerne Community School District/History Teacher and Curriculum Coordinator, Corwith

Diane Pratt, Fort Dodge Community School District/Talented & Gifted Teacher, Fort Dodge

Carl Smith, Iowa State University/Professor, School of Education, Ames

Dan Smith, School Administrators of Iowa/Executive Director, Clive

David Stoakes, Retired⁵, Cedar Falls

Denny Wulf, Norwalk Community School District/Superintendent, Norwalk

Don Zuck, Retired⁶, Ankeny

⁵ Cedar Falls School District/ Superintendent at time of appointment to task force

⁶ Ankeny Economic Development Corp./ Executive Director at time of appointment to task force

Non-Voting Task Force Membership

Linda Fandel, Office of the Governor/Special Assistant for Education, Des Moines

Phil Wise, Iowa Department of Education/Policy Advisor to the Director, Des Moines

Ryan Wise, Task Force Facilitator, Iowa Department of Education/Policy Fellow⁷, Des Moines

⁷ Also doctoral candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

2012 Meeting Schedule

Date	City	Facility	Time
March 2	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	Noon to 4 p.m.
April 20	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
May 11	Clive	School Administrators of Iowa	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
June 8	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
July 27	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
August 17	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
September 21	Des Moines	Iowa Department of Education/Grimes Building	9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
September 28	Des Moines	Ola Babcock Miller Building	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Introduction

Our goal is improvement. By most accounts, Iowa's schools are just as good - if not better - than they have ever been. But regardless of past successes or existing capacity, our schools can and must be better than they are today. The state has a proud history of commitment to its schools and to providing Iowa's children the best future possible through an education system built for quality.

But Iowa does not make the journey toward building a top-quality education system alone. Other states around the United States and (perhaps more importantly) other education systems around the world have also engaged in efforts to dramatically improve their schools. While Iowa's schools are still good, several other systems have been able to make whole-system changes and have seen marked improvements. Many of these systems have now equaled or surpassed Iowa's historical educational achievements.

The global and instantaneous nature of our world now compels us to take up, with steadfast resolve, the systemic work of dramatically improving Iowa's school system. This work is necessary and important because the future of Iowa's children is what is at stake. As generations of Iowans have done before, it is our turn and our responsibility to make a significant and focused effort to improve Iowa's schools.

At the heart of every Iowa community is a school, and within these schools are educators who do their very best to teach our children. These educators are worthy and deserving of our respect and appreciation. The work of this task force focuses on putting in place a new vision for the teaching profession, with far greater supports and career opportunities than have been previously available.

The recommendations contained within this document are the result of a collaborative and inclusive process. We used a consensus-based process to arrive at these recommendations, meaning the membership of the entire task force stands behind each recommendation in this document.

Iowa's children deserve nothing less than an educator workforce of the highest caliber, and Iowa's teachers deserve a thoughtful system of professional supports and career pathways. In the strongest possible terms, we recommend that the Iowa Legislature and the Governor work together to implement and sustain the transformational vision of the teaching profession contained in this document. We further call upon those within the education community to take up these recommendations with the same open heart and hopeful spirit with which they were developed.

Executive Summary

We developed a theory of action that describes how our recommendations will move Iowa toward achieving its vision of providing a world-class education for all students. Simply put, a theory of action helps us be explicit about **what** we are doing, **why** we are choosing a particular course of action, and **how** we expect our actions will lead to improved outcomes (Curtis and City, 2009). Our theory of action is as follows:

If we effectively compensate teachers; recruit and promote excellent teachers and provide support as they collaborate reflectively to refine their practice; create the political will and understanding necessary to remake the status of the teaching profession; give highly effective teachers opportunities to grow, refine, and share their expertise; and develop a clear system with quality implementation, then... student learning will increase, student outcomes will improve, and students will be prepared to succeed in a globally competitive environment.

The development of a statewide leadership and compensation framework will help accomplish six key goals. Iowa will...

- 1) Attract able and promising new teachers by offering a more competitive starting salary and a variety of enhanced career opportunities.
- 2) Retain the most effective teachers in teaching (as opposed to administration or to leaving the field altogether) by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- 3) Encourage professional growth in teaching practice by recognizing and rewarding teachers who seek out learning opportunities aligned with local goals.
- 4) Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools, districts, and statewide to learn from each other.
- 5) Reward initiative and competence by creating pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership and compensation.
- 6) Improve student performance by strengthening instruction.

During the course of our work, four themes emerged that undergird each of our recommendations:

1) A systemic approach

The task force engaged in a wide range of discussions over nearly seven months. One imperative was clear from the beginning – the necessity to take a systemic approach to our work. What this means is that we examined each of the links in the human capital pipeline: the connections between training, entry into the profession, ongoing support, and career development. For a compensation and leadership system to work, it truly must be a system and not separate components that function in isolation.

2) Loose-tight leadership

Iowa has a strong tradition of local control. The task force’s recommendations strike a balance that both honors this tradition and provides sufficient direction to ensure excellence in every classroom. We believe that the best way to do this is to be “loose” in areas that call for autonomy and have the potential to spur innovation and “tight” on the essential, non-negotiable components of the system necessary to ensure success. We have attempted to distinguish between the two throughout this report.

3) A focus on implementation

Iowa has never had a shortage of good ideas designed to improve education. In fact, many of these ideas have found their way into state statute. What we have lacked, however, is consistent funding coupled with fidelity of implementation. The recommendations detailed in this report will take root and achieve the intended purpose if, *and only if*, adequate resources are provided, systemic implementation occurs, and feedback cycles are developed, which will ensure stability and nurture improvement over time.

4) Evidence-based best practices

In recent years, the field of education has become an ideological battleground. The task force endeavored to avoid becoming a casualty in this war by making recommendations grounded in research and proven to be effective in both the United States and abroad. While each of the 25 members of this task force brought a diverse set of experiences and a unique perspective about what is needed to strengthen education in Iowa, we bridged our differences by consistently returning to the practices most common to successful systems.

With this approach in mind, the task force makes the following recommendations:

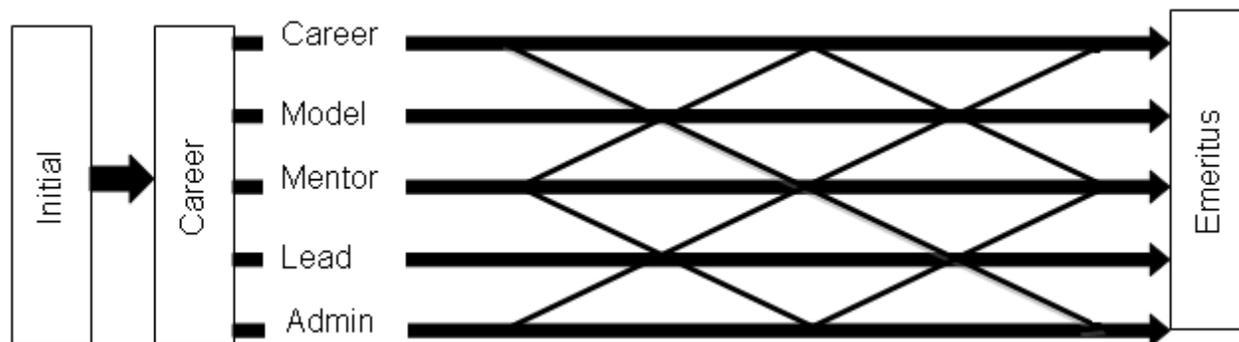
- 1) Create and fund multiple, meaningful, and well-designed career pathway opportunities open to all teachers in Iowa.
- 2) Establish a pathway that utilizes the wisdom and expertise of educators who are not currently practicing, including retired teachers.
- 3) Review existing allocations and use these funds strategically to enhance teacher compensation and create leadership opportunities.
- 4) Appropriate new money for the explicit purposes of raising base pay to a competitive level and creating additional leadership opportunities for teachers.
- 5) Establish a Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation to ensure consistent and successful implementation.
- 6) Collaborate with districts implementing a mechanism for piloting peer assistance and coaching programs.
- 7) Incentivize teachers to teach in locally and state-defined hard-to-staff subjects and high-need schools.
- 8) Build upon existing policy and statute, and provide adequate, sustained funding and implementation support for teacher leadership.
- 9) Set the boundaries of the system, but allow districts to customize.
- 10) Provide time for local planning and implementation inclusive of teachers in the decision-making process.
- 11) Require districts to implement professional development structures aligned with the Iowa Professional Development Model that support each career pathway, and utilize teacher leaders to ensure continuous collaboration on student growth.
- 12) Coordinate the development of teacher leadership pathways with teacher preparation programs.
- 13) Create a residency year for entry into the teaching profession to build a more seamless transition from teacher preparation to practice/employment.

Our Recommendations

1) Create and fund multiple, meaningful, and well-designed career pathway opportunities open to all teachers in Iowa.

Teachers should have multiple, meaningful, and well-designed career pathway opportunities open to them. These career pathways should expand career options through recognition of professional growth, leadership, and effectiveness. While career pathways may look different among districts and schools, the task force has developed a set of duties and responsibilities along a continuum of growth that would serve as a model for schools in their development of a teacher Career pathway system (please see Figure 1 and the descriptions provided below). School districts may develop alternative models that align with the principles of the model described here.

Figure 1



Initial Teachers

An Initial Teacher is defined as any teacher in his/her first two years of teaching. Initial Teachers are evaluated annually. While the duties and responsibilities are described for each of the two years for illustrative purposes, it is important to keep in mind that supports should be tailored to the teacher and not affixed to a rigid timeline.

Duties and Responsibilities

- **Year 1:** The first year for all new teachers in Iowa should be considered their residency year. This approach is similar to the medical profession. Teachers in their residency year have completed their degrees and work full time under intensive supervision. The residency builds upon Iowa's strong foundation of new teacher induction and mentoring and deepens this support by adding more supervision and opportunities for capacity-building. In addition, the residency year includes a reduced teaching load to allow the resident to observe Model, Mentor, and Lead Teachers. Please see pages 24 and 25 for a complete description of the residency.

- **Year 2:** Daily, intensive support tapers off as the teacher assumes a full teaching load. During the second year as an Initial Teacher, teachers meet at least bi-weekly with their Mentor Teachers to plan, evaluate, and discuss their teaching. At the end of the second year, the relevant building leadership determines if the Initial Teacher will become a Career Teacher, receive another year as an Initial Teacher, or be released from teaching and not recommended for standard licensure.

Career Teachers

A Career Teacher is defined as a teacher who has successfully completed the initial phase, is not in his/her first two years of teaching, and has either decided not to apply to become a Mentor, Model or Lead Teacher, or was not selected for one of these pathways. Career Teachers, per legislation, participate in peer reviews annually and demonstrate competency on the Iowa Teaching Standards.

Career Teachers have chosen to hone their craft through full-time teaching. Teachers will choose this pathway for many reasons. They may want to focus on teaching children rather than adults and thereby remain in the classroom full time; they may have other significant responsibilities at their schools, such as coaching athletic teams or sponsoring activities; or they may be limited in the additional duties they can assume because of commitments outside of school. Regardless of the reason that a teacher chooses this pathway, it is one that provides opportunities both for professional growth and increased compensation (albeit at a slower rate than other pathways). In addition, the career pathway has permeable boundaries, which enable teachers to serve in Mentor or Lead Teacher roles for one or more years and later resume duties as a Career Teacher.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Teaches a full load of classes
- Participates in professional development that is focused on areas for professional growth

Model Teacher

A Model Teacher is defined as a teacher who has successfully completed the initial phase, is not in his/her first two years of teaching, and has been selected through a locally developed process to become a Model Teacher (see Appendix A for a recommended selection model).

A Model Teacher has demonstrated mastery of the Iowa Teaching Standards and desires to open his/her classroom on a regular basis for teachers from the school, district, and state to observe. A Model Teacher exemplifies best practices and maintains a direct classroom connection.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Host student teachers, resident and Initial Teachers, and peers
- Invite learners to their classrooms
- Agree to have their names placed on a statewide database

Mentor Teacher

A Mentor Teacher is defined as a teacher who has successfully completed the initial phase, is not in his/her first two years of teaching, and has been selected through a locally developed process to become a Mentor Teacher. Mentor Teachers, per legislation, participate in peer reviews annually and demonstrate competency on the Iowa Teaching Standards. They receive feedback on the quality of their mentorship (through surveys of their mentees). In addition, Mentor Teachers receive professional development in leading adult learners.

The mentor pathway allows teachers to expand their impact beyond their own classrooms by helping develop instructional leadership in other teachers. While the term “Mentor Teacher” may imply that this career pathway is limited simply to teaching and mentoring other teachers, we believe there is a range of additional roles that a teacher in this pathway may fulfill. These roles include, but are not limited to, the following: Professional Learning Community (PLC) Leader, Peer Coach, Building/District Initiatives Leader, statewide task force representative, liaison with university faculty for resident teachers, Collaborative Leader, and Curriculum/Differentiation Coordinator.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Teach a 70 percent schedule and spend the other 30 percent of the time working with their student teachers, Initial, Career, or Model Teachers
- Meet at least bi-weekly with their Initial Teachers and Career Teachers as needed to plan, develop, and teach lessons
- Participate in the peer review process
- Plan and deliver professional development for their Initial and Career Teachers in conjunction with a Lead Teacher

Mentor Teachers are given an extended contract annually to be trained in peer review/coaching and in leading adult learners. In addition, Mentor Teachers

typically are part of a school-wide Instructional Leadership Team comprised of Mentor Teachers, building administrators, and Lead Teachers. The team meets weekly to plan professional development and to identify specific areas of need for which they will provide training to every teacher in the building.

Lead Teacher

A Lead Teacher is defined as a teacher who has successfully completed the initial phase, is not in his/her first two years of teaching, and has been selected through a locally developed process to become a Lead Teacher. Lead Teachers participate in peer reviews annually and demonstrate competency on the Iowa Teaching Standards. In addition, Lead Teachers receive professional development in leading adult learners.

The Lead Teacher pathway differs from the Mentor Teacher pathway as the bulk of the Lead Teacher's time is focused on strengthening the quality of instruction throughout the building. This pathway will appeal to those teachers who want the opportunity to be instructional leaders in their schools, but also want to maintain a presence in the classroom. Teachers may choose to become a Lead Teacher for a year or more and then return to the Career, Model, or Mentor pathway.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Teach a maximum of 50 percent of the time. The rest of their time is spent co-teaching, observing, co-planning, and evaluating student teachers, as well as Initial, Career, Model, and Mentor Teachers
- Facilitate the Instructional Leadership Team
- Plan and deliver professional development

2) Establish a pathway that utilizes the wisdom and expertise of educators who are not currently practicing, including retired teachers.

While many districts utilize retired teachers, the state should provide a framework for more consistently and effectively tapping their wisdom and expertise. We recommend the creation of an Emeritus Teacher role. This role is similar to the higher education designation of emeritus status, which is earned and granted as the result of a process in which the candidate has demonstrated his or her ability. We believe that retired teachers have much to offer the profession, and this pathway provides that opportunity. Emeritus Teachers could be considered part of the candidate pool for both Mentor and Lead Teacher roles, provided they meet the same rigorous criteria for selection and agree to similar job responsibilities. Emeritus Teachers would not have their own classes and would not work full time.

3) Review existing allocations and use these funds strategically to enhance teacher compensation and create leadership opportunities.

The Iowa Department of Education, the Governor, and the Iowa Legislature should further review all existing allocations to determine if these sources could be used more strategically to enhance teacher compensation and create leadership opportunities. Any review of the use of existing funds for repurposing should strongly consider the impact of a redirection of those funds. While we support the further examination of the use of current funds, we believe the task force recommendations for a new compensation and leadership system will have the greatest possible impact through the infusion of additional financial resources.

Local school districts also will need to make decisions about the allocation of their current resources in combination with new, sustainable state money to ensure they achieve the goal of improving teacher compensation and providing additional leadership opportunities.

In considering how districts compensate teachers for earning graduate credit and degrees, we recommend that districts consider the following principles while honoring their previous agreements:

- Graduate degrees in the content area of the teacher's licensure should continue to qualify for pay increases. Such degrees deepen content knowledge, which is a characteristic of high-performing teachers.
- Graduate degrees in education (e.g., Master of Education with concentrations in curriculum and instruction, educational psychology, administration, etc.) should qualify for increased compensation if they are strategically aligned with a school's particular needs, goals, and objectives of school improvement efforts.

Finally, the use and realignment of resources must be strategically and thoughtfully linked to efforts and activities that result in student success. The public ultimately must have confidence that the infusion of additional resources will produce measurable results in attracting promising teachers to the profession, retaining those teachers, and improving student learning.

4) Appropriate new money for the explicit purposes of raising base pay to a competitive level and creating additional leadership opportunities for teachers.

The Legislature should appropriate new money for the explicit purposes of raising base pay to a competitive level and creating additional leadership opportunities for teachers. This money should not be one-time funding, but must be maintained over time.

If we look at the highest-performing education systems in the world, we see that they prioritize teacher quality, which includes offering competitive compensation (OECD, 2011). This approach has improved both student achievement and the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Accordingly, the base and average pay of teachers in Iowa should be in line with that of other professions with similar educational requirements, leadership responsibilities, and time commitments.

Based upon our calculations (see Appendix B), we estimate that this would produce an average starting base salary in the range of \$40,000 - \$45,000. While this range may not be feasible for many of the state's smaller districts, we recommend that the state raise the required minimum salary from the current minimum of \$28,000 to \$35,000 over a three-year phased-in implementation period.

In addition to raising the starting base pay, the state should develop a mechanism to have the base salary increase with inflationary pressures and periodically benchmark the teaching profession against other professional options. For example, the state might require beginning pay increases at the same percentage as those of other teachers in a district. Alternatively, the state might consider using state-level cost-of-living changes. A mechanism to increase the base pay over time is essential to ensure that salaries do not languish near the minimum level for years to come.

Finally, based on our analysis of other systems, we recommend that the movement from Initial to Career should be a rigorous, earned process that is rewarded with a recommended minimum 10 percent increase in salary, and that subsequent moves from Career to Mentor and Mentor to Lead each be rewarded with a similar increase in salary or come with equivalent compensation for additional contract days and leadership responsibilities (see Appendix C for a proposed career pathways compensation proposal for Iowa and Appendix D for examples from the TAP system, Baltimore, and Eagle County, Colorado). Teachers who choose to stay within one career pathway (after entering the career pathway) should receive annual salary increases.

No changes made by legislation should result in any teacher experiencing a reduction in compensation at the time of transition to this new system and throughout the initial implementation of that legislation.

Any changes at the school district level that result from new legislation on teacher compensation and leadership opportunities should not harm any teacher's potential lifetime career earnings.

5) Establish a Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation to ensure consistent and successful implementation.

We recommend the establishment of a standing Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation. We believe that this body will be a vital resource to the Iowa Department of Education and to the education community in implementing the teacher compensation and leadership system. Iowans need to feel confident that this new system will achieve its desired results. The commission will be the mechanism by which this goal is achieved.

The commission will provide support and accountability for the Iowa Department of Education, school districts, and the Governor and Iowa Legislature in the following ways:

Iowa Department of Education

- Advise the director of the Iowa Department of Education on the overall effectiveness of the compensation and leadership system and provide suggestions for improvement
- Recommend approval of district compensation and leadership plans to the Department
- Develop ongoing feedback-loops between districts and the Department to inform and improve the implementation process

School Districts

- Ensure consistent statewide implementation balanced with the need for local flexibility
- Provide districts and schools with “commission-endorsed” examples of compensation and leadership systems
- Communicate best practices across school districts

Governor and Iowa Legislature

- Measure the impact of the legislation on an ongoing, formative basis
- Issue an annual report on the state of teacher leadership and compensation in Iowa to ensure transparency regarding the use and impact of funds
- Provide feedback on teacher compensation and leadership legislation and the impact of these laws on the teaching profession

The development of a commission has several practical advantages. First, it aligns with research on effective implementation (see Fixsen, et al, 2005). Second, the commission serves to build the capacity of the Iowa Department of Education to effectively implement what will certainly be a monumental piece of legislation. At the same time, the commission provides an independent voice for key stakeholders. Finally, the commission's role in gathering diagnostic information on the implementation of the new system models what all good teachers and leaders do – they measure progress along the way and not just at one summative point.

Iowa has been a leader in passing powerful, reform-minded legislation throughout the last quarter of a century. Unfortunately, much of it has had little practical impact due to varied and minimal fidelity in implementation. The impact of this legislation could have been much greater had there been a mechanism to ensure ongoing learning and improvement, as well as consistent implementation statewide. We believe that the Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation will become the engine that powers the continuous improvement of this legislation.

One final point for consideration is the make-up of the commission. We believe that the commission should be appointed by the director of the Iowa Department of Education with support from the Governor and Iowa Legislature, but should have broad geographic and population representation from diverse stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, school board members, parents, post-secondary educators, and designees from professional organizations.

6) Collaborate with districts implementing a mechanism for piloting peer assistance and coaching programs.

We recommend that the Iowa Department of Education collaborate with districts implementing a mechanism for piloting peer assistance and coaching programs. A few districts in Iowa are adopting peer coaching models. These districts provide an excellent opportunity for study. The Iowa Department of Education should be provided

resources for and be directed to further examine these pilots to identify principles and characteristics that can be replicated.

7) Incentivize teachers to teach in locally and state-defined hard-to-staff subjects and high-need schools.

While Iowa has attempted to incentivize teachers to teach in hard-to-staff subjects and in high-need schools (284.11 was designed to do this), these efforts stumbled for two primary reasons: They were under-funded, and there was little implementation support to ensure that the funds were being used for their intended purpose with fidelity. It is critical that future efforts in this area be sustained and structural.

The task force believes that with adequate funding and implementation support, Iowa can address its two most critical labor market issues:

- 1) **High-Need Subjects:** Many districts in Iowa struggle to find qualified teachers for specific subjects. In some communities, the subjects are math and science; in others, it is special education or English as a Second Language. For many districts, finding teachers in all of these areas is a challenge. Every Iowa student deserves access to a quality classroom instructor. Local districts should have the latitude to determine high-need subjects (within reasonable guidelines set by the Iowa Department of Education).
- 2) **High-Need Schools:** Iowa needs its best teachers in schools that face the most challenges. In some communities, this may mean urban centers; in others, it may mean rural communities. Local districts should have the latitude to determine high-need schools (within reasonable guidelines set by the Iowa Department of Education). These decisions should be determined by the latest data and based upon factors including, but not limited to, socioeconomic status (SES), English as a Second Language (ESL), and district graduation rates.

According to Odden and Wallace (2007), “Wage premiums of at least \$5,000-6,000 are likely needed, over whatever the state average salary benchmarks would be” (p. 20). Market-based pay could be funded with a separate pot of money available for schools that meet the criteria. This wage premium would be in addition to compensation for leadership roles.

The purpose of these incentives for high-needs subjects and high-need schools is to recognize and address shortage areas in the educator labor market. The difference in salary is not a reflection of the importance of different roles.

8) Build upon existing policy and statute, and provide adequate, sustained funding and implementation support for teacher leadership.

Iowa already has teacher leadership roles in state statute. Utilizing existing statute as a starting point honors and reinforces those previous policy decisions, which were developed with bipartisan support but were, unfortunately, never funded, nor were they implemented with fidelity. Supporting existing leadership roles and implementing new leadership roles must reflect a systemic approach to improving the teaching profession. This new career pathways system does not signal the acceptance that there will be no additional resources. It signals that there is a systems problem that cannot be corrected merely with additional resources.

If public education in Iowa is going to continue to be the pathway to a better life for our students, and, if the future of our society relies on a creative, intelligent, motivated, and educated workforce, it is imperative that the educators of Iowa have multiple opportunities to advance themselves professionally. It is the opinion of this task force that a way to achieve this desired future for our students is for the state to fully fund the career pathways proposal from its inception and moving forward. If the state does not fund this program in its entirety, it is the opinion of this task force that the economic cost of the pathways program would place crippling financial burdens on local school districts, which would justify the non-support for this proposal by this task force.

9) Set the boundaries of the system, but allow districts to customize within those boundaries.

In the development of any state-led compensation and leadership system, the Legislature must recognize the need to strike a careful balance between state policy leadership and local control. Any legislative proposals should not negate the process of local decision-making by school boards and employee organizations. While the state should be clear and explicit about the purpose and goals of the teacher compensation and leadership system, local school districts should retain flexibility in the means used to attain those goals. Legislation, in combination with Iowa Department of Education guidance, should offer design principles and examples of a new teacher compensation and leadership system, but, at the same time, the legislation must recognize districts' needs to tailor the system to the local context.

At the state level, this means...

- The state will provide a basic structure of career pathways and compensation to which all Iowa school districts will adhere (or districts will provide an alternative model that aligns with the goals of the state-provided model).
- The Governor will establish the standing state Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation, which will guide districts in planning and implementing local use of Iowa Educator Career Pathways. This body will ensure accountability – that the structure of the Iowa Educator Career Pathways is implemented with integrity at the district level, and that choices made on behalf of district needs meet or exceed the minimum, state-established boundaries.
- The state will provide grant opportunities for innovations in teacher leadership and the Iowa Educator Career Pathways.
- Create and maintain a database of teacher leaders for the purpose of sharing expertise between districts.

At the district level, this means...

- Within the career pathways, districts can identify local needs that can be satisfied by the time, level of skills, and competencies of the teacher leader.
- Local districts will encourage application to, and participation in, teacher leadership roles and decide the optimal usage of their skills for their districts. The District will assume the role of capacity-builders to ensure a pool of future leaders. Local districts will adhere to the state structure for teacher leaders, but will design and configure the model to fit their local context. Local districts will utilize a Teacher Advisory Committee that will assist administrators in the recommended selection procedures.
- Local districts may use Iowa's cadre of teacher leaders from other districts and/or AEAs when necessary.
- Local districts will support teacher leaders within their charge with opportunities for training and professional development appropriate to growth within their roles/pathways.

10) Provide time for local planning and implementation inclusive of teachers in the decision-making process.

In establishing a new teacher leadership and compensation system, we recommend that the statewide implementation commences immediately, but that the requirements of the system, specifically the leadership structures and compensation requirements, be phased in over a three-year time period.

In addition, the success of this system hinges on teachers owning the creation process at the local level. This should not be a top-down process at any level, either from the state to districts or from administrators to teachers. Districts should utilize frameworks to ensure equal representation of teachers and administrators in the decision-making process.

11) Require districts to implement professional development structures that are aligned with the Iowa Professional Development Model, that support each career pathway, and that utilize teacher leaders to ensure continuous collaboration on student growth.

Individual districts should be able to determine the best structures to create and support required teacher collaboration. Indeed, some already have. What is non-negotiable, though, is that in implementing this leadership and compensation system locally, each district must have in place a system of professional development that improves instruction. In addition, collaboration should be at the center of any teacher leadership system. The Iowa Professional Development Model must serve as the driver for all professional development decisions (see Appendix E for a description of the Model).

12) Coordinate the development of teacher leadership pathways with teacher preparation programs.

This recommendation produces three important benefits related to the alignment of teacher preparation and the teaching profession:

- 1) Establishes a seamless process from teacher preparation throughout professional development, including induction, residency, and career options for all teachers.
- 2) Prepares educators early in their preparation for the roles they will fill within our educational system. This includes grounding in the various paths that teachers may pursue, such as Career, Model, Mentor, or Lead Teachers.

- 3) Facilitates the establishment of a more systematic connection among pre-service teachers, faculty in teacher preparation programs, cooperating teachers, Mentor Teachers, and Lead Teachers.

This recommendation also results in three critical needs:

- 1) The measurement/assessment of “preparedness” for students graduating from preparation programs should mirror the multiple measures in teacher performance systems used in our schools.
- 2) Representatives of preparation programs need to be actively involved in proposed legislative and policy efforts related to teacher leadership and compensation.
- 3) Pre-service teachers should be placed in classrooms of Model Teachers or Mentor Teachers and should be observed and mentored by trained Mentor or Lead Teachers. A Mentor or Lead Teacher who has a formal relationship with a teacher preparation program may be in a position to provide the program-required evaluation of a student teacher.

13) Create a residency year for entry into the teaching profession to build a more seamless transition from teacher preparation to practice/employment.

The first year of full-time teaching as an Initial Teacher should be spent in a residency that is marked by the following characteristics:

- Intensive supervision/mentoring by a Mentor or Lead Teacher who has been specially trained for this role (i.e., teaching teachers how to teach).
- Participation in a capstone seminar that is team-taught by the Mentor/Lead Teacher and a faculty member from a qualified teacher preparation program (preferably the program from which the resident graduated).
- Frequent observation, evaluation, and professional development specifically designed to link the material taught in the teacher preparation program to the specific standards and behaviors that constitute effective teaching.
- Sufficient collaboration time for the resident teacher to be able to observe and learn from Model Teachers in the school and/or in neighboring schools.

- Evaluation of resident teachers should mirror the evaluation that will be used throughout the rest of the teaching profession, but include observations specific to induction into the teaching profession. Evaluation and recommendation should be made by the Mentor/Lead Teacher assigned to the resident, the building administrator, and the College/University faculty involved in teaching the residency seminar.

In order to strengthen the linkage between teacher preparation and the teaching profession, the residency year should be designed so that:

- The Mentor/Lead Teacher assigned to the resident has knowledge of the teacher preparation curriculum so as to make connections between theory and practice;
- The teacher preparation faculty member should have specific knowledge of the resident's school, its characteristics, and its unique challenges
- Feedback about the resident's readiness for teaching should be conveyed to the resident's teacher preparation program faculty so curriculum adjustments can be made, if necessary.

Finally, the residency year should not replace the clinical component of teacher preparation, but it may allow for significant and qualitative improvements in the pre-service placements. The Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Board of Educational Examiners, and Iowa Department of Education should consider creating a specific credential needed for Mentor/Lead Teachers who work with resident teachers.

Conclusion

The Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation respectfully submits these recommendations for consideration.

This document represents our best advice, as a knowledgeable body of professionals, on how to tap teacher leadership and how to use compensation as a supporting lever in an effort to both strengthen the teaching profession and improve student results. These recommendations represent the consensus of the group. If acted upon, we believe they will form the basis of both a policy and culture shift in Iowa's education system that will ensure that all students in Iowa receive a world-class education.

We are confident that this plan will fulfill the goals of our mission statement, which we drafted during our first meeting in March. Specifically, this system will:

- Create a world-renowned teacher leadership system that guarantees the finest teachers in Iowa's classrooms.
- Create the most student-centered, learning-focused, teacher-led schools in the world.
- Create teacher leadership pathways to increase collaboration, strengthen the teaching profession, attract and retain highly effective educators, and prepare students to be successful in their next stages of life.
- Provide a vision for teacher leadership through research, collaboration, and results.
- Make Iowa THE leader in education by improving student learning through shared leadership.

We approach the months ahead with a sense of optimism and possibility. We look forward to continuing to support this important work as it moves forward.

References⁸

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⁸ More reference materials are available on the task force's wiki site: <http://iatchrldr.wikispaces.com/>

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Selection Process

For the Model, Mentor, and Lead Teacher Positions the selection will consist of three groups making a collective decision.

- a. Each District (or school) will establish a Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC). This Teacher Advisory Committee will consist of 5, 7 or 9 teachers (selected by the staff) that will process the application of classroom teachers interested in becoming a Model, Mentor, or Lead Teacher. The TAC members will vote on each candidate's application. The TAC will either recommend or deny the application by simple majority.
- b. Building administrators will review the application to determine if the applicant is the correct teacher for the Model, Mentor, or Lead Teacher position. Administrators, as a group, will have one yes or no vote.
- c. Each teacher will have a collaborative teaching partner (assigned at the beginning of each year) that will review the application. The peer partner will have one yes or no vote.

Once the three votes are tallied, if the applicant has at least two 'yes' votes from the three applicant review groups, the applicant is officially eligible for the pathway to which he/she applied. If there are multiple applicants, the school district will conduct interviews to determine who (and how many) will serve as Model, Mentor and Lead Teachers.

Appendix B: Salary Calculations

The starting base pay for BA/BS shall be equivalent to the average starting base pay for BA/BS graduates employed in Iowa in similar non-teaching fields. This average for non-teaching fields shall be multiplied by 12/12 for 12-month teachers, by 10/12 for traditional-contract (approximately 195 days) teachers. We estimate that using all applicable data would produce a starting base pay in the range of \$40,000 to \$45,000 for 195-day contracts and \$49,000 to \$54,000 for 12-month contracts.

Occupation	Average Salary		Percent Change 2010-2011
	2010	2011	
Electrical Engineer	\$ 77,030	\$ 77,660	0.8%
Civil Engineer	\$ 75,150	\$ 75,020	-0.2%
Software Developer, Applications	\$ 72,972	\$ 74,730	2.4%
Computer Programmers	\$ 64,550	\$ 64,820	0.4%
Accountant & Auditor	\$ 60,840	\$ 61,550	1.2%
Speech-Language Pathologist	\$ 60,940	\$ 63,610	4.4%
Registered Nurse	\$ 51,970	\$ 53,300	2.6%
Teacher	\$ 49,473	\$ 49,794	0.6%
Child, Family and School Social Worker	\$ 39,040	\$ 37,790	-3.2%
Interior Designer	\$ 43,400	\$ 44,900	3.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Iowa, May 2010 and May 2011.
 Note: Teacher average salaries are average regular salaries based on Iowa Department of Education, Basic Educational Data Survey, Staff files.

Appendix C: Iowa Career Pathways Compensation Proposal

Career Teachers

- Career Teachers receive a recommended minimum 10 percent increase in salary when they move from an Initial to a Career Teacher role
- Career Teachers are placed on Step 1 of the salary scheduled that provides annual cost-of-living raises

Model Teachers

- We are not recommending a specific amount, but based on their earning and accepting a Model Teacher role we feel Model Teachers should receive some additional salary augmentation

Mentor Teachers

- Mentor Teachers are provided an annual extended contract at their per diem rate of pay for the step and lane that they are on
- Mentor Teachers also receive a recommended minimum 10 percent increase in salary

Lead Teachers

- Receive an annual extended contract at a per diem rate to cover the time they are required to spend each year being trained in using the evaluation instrument and any additional days for planning PD
- Receive a recommended minimum 10 percent increase in salary as long as they stay in this role
- Receive annual step increases the same as all teachers

Nationally Board Certified Teachers

- Teachers achieving NBPTS certification should continue to be compensated by the state
- Teachers achieving NBPTS certification should be given special consideration for teacher leadership roles

Appendix D: Other Career Pathway Compensation Examples

Eagle County, Colorado

- Mentor Teachers
 - Classroom responsibilities 70 percent of the day
 - Traditional calendar contract plus a maximum of 10 additional days
 - Provides cluster group leadership
 - Coaching and evaluation of teachers
 - Paid \$4,500 stipend for extra days and responsibilities
- Master Teachers
 - Classroom responsibilities 30 percent of the day
 - Traditional calendar contract plus a maximum of 20 additional days
 - Oversees all cluster groups
 - Coaching and evaluation of teachers
 - Paid \$10,350 stipend for extra days and responsibilities

Baltimore, MD

- Standard Pathway
 - Focus on instruction, professional development
 - Upon Entry: \$46,773
 - Top Step: \$52,643
- Professional Pathway
 - Focus on classroom success; active in school-based roles
 - Upon Entry: \$58,434
 - Top Step: \$82,769
- Model Pathway
 - Serve as a model of excellence; play a leadership role; create professional development opportunities
 - Upon Entry: \$85,337
 - Top Step: \$91,337

- Lead Pathway
 - Serve as lead academic teacher at a school; collaborate with the principal to improve academic performance
 - Upon Entry: \$92,916
 - Top Step: \$99,316

TAP System

- Mentor Teacher
 - Earn approximately \$3,000 stipend
 - Lead professional development and provide on-going support to teachers
- Master Teacher
 - Earn approximately \$6,000 stipend
 - Lead professional development and provide on-going support to teachers

Appendix E: Iowa Professional Development Model

- Operating Principles ([go to definitions](#))**

 - Focus on Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
 - Participative Decision Making (School & District)
 - Leadership
 - Simultaneity

