

## TEN ROLES FOR TEACHER LEADERS

by:

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Teacher leadership approaches are as diverse as the teachers themselves. Teacher leaders take on different roles to support their schools and students' success, fostering a sense of collaboration. Whether the roles are formally assigned or shared informally, they help to strengthen the school's capacity for improvement. Because teachers can lead in many different ways, they can act as leaders among their colleagues. The following ten roles outline how teachers can contribute to a school's success.

1. Resource Provider—They help their colleagues and share classroom resources like websites, classroom materials, reading materials, or other student resources. Professional resources such as articles, books, lesson or learning plans, and assessment tools can be shared.

2. Instructional specialists help their colleagues effectively utilize instructional strategies. This support might include ideas for differentiating instruction or collaborating with other teachers on lesson plans. Instructional specialists can also research research-based instructional strategies, consider which instructional methods are right for their school, and share ideas with their colleagues.

3. Curriculum Specialist—Content Standards. Understanding how the various elements of the curriculum are linked and how they are used to plan instruction and assessment is essential to delivering the curriculum consistently across the school. The Curriculum Specialist helps teachers agree on standards, adhere to adopted curricula, use common learning progressions, and develop common assessments.

4. Instructional Supporter – Instructional supporters often work in classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas through classroom demonstrations, co-teaching, or observation and feedback.

5. Learning Facilitator – A teacher's role is to provide employees with professional learning opportunities. By helping teachers learn from each other, they can focus on directly improving student learning. Professional learning is more relevant, focused on teachers' work in the classroom, and tailored to gaps in student learning. Such learning communities can break down the norm of isolation that permeates many schools.

6. Mentors The mentor role for new teachers is common to senior teachers. Mentors serve as role models, familiarize new teachers with their new schools, and provide guidance and advice on curriculum, procedures, practices, and policies. The mentor role requires significant time and expertise and contributes greatly to the development of the new profession.

7. Principal – Principalship means serving on committees such as school improvement teams, acting as class or department heads, supporting school initiatives, and representing the school on local and district work groups and committees. Principals share the school's vision, align their professional goals with school and district goals, and are collectively accountable for its success.

8. Data Teachers can access a wealth of data but only sometimes use it for instruction. Seasoned teachers can lead conversations where their colleagues analyze and use this information to improve their teaching.

9. Catalyst for Change – Teacher leaders may act as a catalyst for change. They are visionaries who are "never satisfied with the status quo and always looking for a better way." Catalyst teachers are confident and strongly committed to continuous improvement. They ask questions to analyze student progress.

10. Learner The most important role teacher leaders assume is learner; learners model continual improvement, demonstrate lifelong learning, and use what they learn to help.

*References:*