

Title: A review of Teacher Leader positions in five districts

Date: June 2010

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**Question:** Could you provide information on how Teacher Leader positions are structured across the country?

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**Response:**

This response synthesizes literature and innovative practices in other districts to address the following questions:

- What types of roles do Teacher Leaders take on?
- How are the Teacher Leader positions structured?
- How are Teacher Leaders selected and supported?
- How do these Teacher Leader positions fit into each district's alternative management structure?
- What lessons have these districts learned from their experiences in using Teacher Leaders?

### **Districts contacted**

To identify districts with innovative Teacher Leader programs and positions, REL West researchers initially spoke with scholars affiliated with the Center for Educator Compensation Reform, the National Center on Performance Incentives, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. REL West staff then collected data on the districts recommended by these experts, reviewing key documents and interviewing district officials. We selected a subset of five districts based on the extent of their use of Teacher Leaders and the availability of a district representative to be interviewed. Table 1 provides a list of the participating districts.

**Table 1. Districts included for review**

School district	Students	Schools	Classroom teachers (FTE) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Austin Independent School District</b> Austin, Texas	82,564	126	5,836
<b>Long Beach Unified School District</b> Long Beach, California	88,186	95	4,210
<b>Montgomery County Public Schools</b> Rockville, Maryland	137,717	206	9,639
<b>San Juan Unified School District</b> Carmichael, California	47,400	81	2,240
<b>Toledo Public Schools</b> Toledo, Ohio	28,251	65	1,922

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data (CCD) public school district data for SY2007/08, retrieved 05/19/10 from <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>.

### Definitions of Teacher Leaders used in this paper

For the purposes of this report, Teacher Leaders are defined as accomplished teachers who accept formal positions or tasks doing activities beyond classroom teaching, yet remain contractually classified as teachers and not administrators. To conduct their Teacher Leader activities, Teacher Leaders may receive full, partial, or no release from their classroom duties.

### What we learned

The following data come primarily from interviews with a representative from each school district who has direct knowledge of the district’s Teacher Leader positions. The interviews were supplemented with reviews of district documents, district websites, and, when available, research reports created by non-district researchers. Interviewed personnel and key resources are listed at the end of the report.

#### What types of roles do Teacher Leaders take on?

During the examination of the various Teacher Leader positions in the five districts, it became clear that they could be sorted into four types: *Master Teacher*, *Staff Development Leader*, *Program Leader*, and *School Site Leader*.

Teacher Leader positions of the Master Teacher and Staff Development Leader types are intended to assist fellow teachers in improving their classroom practices. In most instances, Teacher Leaders in a Master Teacher role are also involved in evaluating their fellow teachers, which can involve recommending a teacher’s dismissal. (San Juan representatives noted that dismissals in their districts that have been based on reports from Teacher Leaders in Master Teacher positions all have been upheld.) Districts described these two types of Teacher Leader positions as central to their systems for producing improvements in teaching, as well as implementing more general reforms. According to the district representatives interviewed, using Teacher Leaders in these two

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<sup>1</sup> Amounts rounded to the nearest whole number.

types of positions has been more effective at producing desired teaching improvements than had previous district approaches that relied primarily on administrators conducting staff development and teacher evaluations (see the lessons learned section, below). The other two types of Teacher Leader positions — Program Leader and School Site Leader — are both involved in management activities. Program Leader positions involve the management of large programs across multiple schools or the entire district, while School Site Leader positions concern the management of teams of teachers within a school. Brief descriptions of the four types are provided in Table 2.

**Table 2. Brief descriptions of Teacher Leader types**

<b>Assisting fellow teachers</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Master Teacher</i></p> <p>Provide individual support to their fellow teachers and usually conduct formal summative evaluations All, but Austin, followed the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program structure (see box 1, Peers assisting peers, below) The central example is an expert teacher, called a Consulting Teacher for the PAR program, who supports and evaluates a cohort of new and struggling experienced teachers Mentors, who only provide support, are also included in this category</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Staff Development Leader</i></p> <p>Facilitate and/or provide staff development and workshops for groups of teachers Positions were often subject-matter specific Based in schools and at the district level Examples include technology trainers, generalists, and content-specific coaches</p>
<b>Conducting management activities</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Project Leader</i></p> <p>Manage large-scale projects across multiple schools or the entire district Examples include managers of Title I and districtwide writing programs Positions were the least common and were not present in all districts</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>School Site Leader</i></p> <p>Manage school-site activities Examples include department chairs and grade-level team leaders Four of the five districts described these more traditional positions as Teacher Leaders San Juan also reported school-level positions, members of the Site Leadership Team</p>

### **Box 1. Peers assisting peers**

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) is a program available both to beginning teachers and to experienced teachers who have either been referred to it or have requested to participate. Central to the program are Consulting Teachers, the predominant Master Teacher type of position in the districts reviewed for this response. In most PAR districts, Consulting Teachers are released full-time for periods of up to five years so they can mentor and evaluate other teachers.

A PAR panel, composed of teacher union and district administration representatives, manages the program, including selection of the Consulting Teachers, oversight of their work with fellow teachers, and final evaluation decisions based on the progress reports of the Consulting Teachers.

Source: *A User's Guide to Peer Assistance and Review*. Harvard Graduate School of Education. Available at <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/par/parinfo/>

### **How are the Teacher Leader positions structured?**

Across the five districts, Teacher Leader positions are structured differently; however, several commonalities are evident.

- Most Master Teacher, Staff Development Leader, and Project Leader positions are Full Classroom Release (FCR), while most School Site Leader positions conduct their non-classroom responsibilities with no classroom release time (NCR).
- Most Master Teacher, Staff Development Leader, and Project Leader positions are supervised by district staff, while School Site Leader positions are generally supervised by their principals. Many Master Teacher positions are also supervised by a PAR panel.
- Four of five districts established service terms for the majority of Master Teacher positions (e.g., three years), then reassigned these Teacher Leaders back to classroom teaching once their term was complete. For example, at the completion of their service term, for which there may be a one-time extension, Master Teachers in Montgomery County are required to return to a classroom position for a minimum of two years before seeking another non-teaching position, while in San Juan, Master Teachers must return to their classroom for at least one year. This reassignment back to the classroom is intended to keep teachers moving in a cycle between teaching and Master Teacher-type positions. The aim is to keep expert teachers close to classroom teaching so they can maintain or improve their own teaching skills and their related coaching credibility. An additional reported benefit of having Teacher Leaders in Master Teacher positions cycle back into classroom teaching is that they bring with them the learning gained from their Master Teacher experience, which means their students and school colleagues can profit from it.

- In practice, three of these districts reported different rates of Master Teachers returning to classroom teaching.<sup>2</sup> In Montgomery County, seven of the 19 Master Teachers who exited in 2009 and 2010 returned to classroom teaching, while nine continued in other Teacher Leader roles (e.g., staff development teacher) and three retired. San Juan reported that, over the last 10 years, only one Master Teacher went on to an administrative position and did not return to the classroom. During the same time, several former Master Teachers reapplied following their return to classroom teaching. Long Beach reported that of the four Master Teacher positions held, three went on to become administrators and one continues to be the district’s sole Master Teacher.
- A majority of districts reported that many Teacher Leaders in Staff Development Leader and Project Manager positions (as compared to those in Master Teacher positions) do not return to teaching, but pursue other Teacher Leader or administrative positions.
- While a large majority of Teacher Leaders received stipends for their duties, districts also described various non-monetary incentives associated with these leadership positions, such as professional recognition, experience, and the betterment of schoolwide practices.

Table 3 provides a summary of these structural elements for each Teacher Leader type.

**Table 3. Summary of key structural elements for each Teacher Leader type**

Category	Classroom release	Supervisor	Reported stipends	Case load range
<b>Master Teacher</b>	FCR with 3-year terms or with no limit (summative evaluation positions)	Mostly district staff and PAR panel	\$4,000 – \$6,850	10 – 17 (summative evaluation positions)
<b>Staff Development Leader</b>	Mostly FCR with 2- or 3-year terms or with no limit; some PCR and NCR	Mix of district staff and principals	paid summer days – \$5,000	Single school, all teachers to multiple schools
<b>Project Leader</b>	Mix of FCR with no term limits and NCR (Toledo’s TRACS program)	District staff	\$4,050 – \$6,285	All schools for FCR; specific projects for Toledo’s TRACS program <sup>3</sup> (NCR)
<b>School-Site Leader</b>	Mostly NCR; some PCR	Principal	\$0 – \$1,400	n/a

*Key:* FCR is “Full Classroom Release”; PCR is “Part Classroom Release”; NCR is “No Classroom Release.”

*Source:* Interviews and document review for each district.

### **How are Teacher Leaders selected and supported?**

Representatives from reviewed districts described selection processes that range from very structured and rigorous to more flexible. Overall, the most stringent and selective processes were those for filling Master Teacher positions.

<sup>2</sup> As for the other two districts, we were unable to obtain information from Toledo, and Austin’s Master Teachers do not do evaluations and, thus, are not included here.

<sup>3</sup> Toledo’s TRACS program provides selected teachers with leadership training. These TRACS Teacher Leaders conduct discrete projects during their non-classroom teaching time, usually during the summer. TRACS positions are included in the Project Leader type.

- Four of the five districts reported that candidates for Master Teacher positions must have a minimum of 3–5 years of successful teaching experience and undergo a structured, multi-step selection process that includes letters of recommendation, writing samples, unannounced classroom observations, and interviews by a selection panel. (Toledo requires five to seven years of successful teaching experience and also reported a similar selection process for its TRACS program, whose Teacher Leaders carry out Project Leader tasks.) Districts reported that the purpose of this more intensive review process is to select candidates who are expert teachers and who can command the respect of their mentees, even in the often difficult process of assisting a struggling teacher to improve his or her classroom practice.
- For filling the other types of Teacher Leader positions (Staff Development Leader, Project Leader, and School-Site Leader), districts generally described a more flexible selection process, which may involve the applicant having an interview with the position supervisor, the school principal, or a district staff member, as well as recommendations from the applicant’s current principal and peers. San Juan was the only district to have a distinctly different approach to filling one category of Teacher Leader positions, that of a School Site Leader or, more specifically in San Juan, the positions of school leadership team member and department chairs. The teachers chosen for these positions are described as being selected by faculty vote.

The districts described a range of training supports that vary by type of Teacher Leader position. In general, training for Master Teacher roles involving evaluation is the most specific and prescribed. Training occurs both in preparation for and as support during the Master Teacher work. For the four districts using the PAR program structure, Teacher Leaders in Master Teacher positions who will conduct evaluations also receive ongoing, scheduled oversight and advice from the PAR panel.

- All five districts reported specific training required for Teacher Leaders in Master Teacher positions. Training topics highlighted as especially important or successful include conducting observations, analyzing teaching, effective report writing, and conducting “difficult conversations.” For some districts, trainings continue throughout the Master Teacher’s term. Some of these trainings were conducted by outside teaching organizations or universities.
- For the other three types of Teacher Leader positions, districts reported making most training decisions on a case-by-case basis, depending on the requirements of the position and the needs of the particular Teacher Leaders. However, Austin, Toledo, and Long Beach described some particular Teacher Leader positions (e.g., Toledo’s Teacher Coach positions under the category Staff Development Leader) for which Teacher Leaders always receive specific training support.
- Of note, Toledo’s TRACS program offers general Teacher Leader training and development for selected classroom teachers interested in undertaking some responsibilities outside the classroom. TRACS teachers conduct discrete projects during their non-classroom teaching time, usually during the summer. TRACS positions are included in the Project Leader type. Many candidates for other specific Teacher Leader positions in Toledo come from this program. Austin reports that it is looking to move toward a similar Teacher Leader Development Program model.

## How do these Teacher Leader positions fit into each district's alternative management structure?

Each district uses the variety of Teacher Leader positions in different ways, but all use some variation of a Master Teacher role to support and/or evaluate fellow teachers.

- In three of the five districts, Teacher Leaders in Master Teacher positions have summative evaluation responsibilities. In these three districts (Toledo, Montgomery County, and San Juan), Master Teacher positions focus exclusively on a combination of mentoring (including formative assessments) and summative evaluation, both for new teachers and for teachers who are experienced but struggling. In the fourth district, Long Beach, Teacher Leaders serving in the position of Curriculum Coaches, a role that includes aspects of Master Teacher, provide support, including formative evaluation, for both categories of teachers and their advice may be sought by principals for summative evaluations. In the fifth district, Austin, principals conduct teachers' summative evaluations, with those in Master Teacher positions responsible only for providing support and only to new teachers, not to struggling experienced teachers.
- For *struggling experienced teachers* in the four districts that follow the PAR program model (all but Austin), Master Teachers are involved in the teachers' summative evaluations; however, the level of involvement varies. In Montgomery County, San Juan, and Toledo, the Master Teacher makes a formal summative evaluation recommendation to the PAR panel. In Long Beach, by contrast, it is the principal who makes the final summative evaluation determination based on his or her own formal observations, and, if the principal seeks it, on advice from a Master Teacher. Table 4a summarizes the roles of the Master Teachers, principals, and PAR panels in the evaluation process of struggling experienced teachers in each district.

**Table 4a. Roles of Master Teacher, principal, and PAR panel in evaluating struggling experienced teachers, by district**

	Austin	Long Beach	Montgomery County	San Juan	Toledo
<b>Support/Formative Assessment</b>					
<b>Master Teacher</b>	Exclusive responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility
<b>Principal</b>	Kept informed by Master Teacher	Consults with Master Teacher	Ongoing involvement with Master Teacher	Kept informed by Master Teacher	Not reported
<b>PAR Panel</b>	n/a	n/a	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher
<b>Summative Evaluation</b>					
<b>Master Teacher</b>	No role	Advice to principal	Formal report to PAR panel	Formal report to PAR panel	Formal report to PAR panel
<b>Principal</b>	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observation Consults with Master Teacher	If Master Teacher disagreement, can do separate observations and PAR panel presentation	Not reported
<b>PAR Panel</b>	n/a	n/a	Makes final determination	Makes final determination	Makes report to human resources and union for final determination

- For *beginning teachers* in Austin and Long Beach, the support (including formative assessments) and summative evaluation processes are the same as those for struggling experienced teachers. In Montgomery County, San Juan, and Toledo, the Master Teacher provides support and formative assessments and consults with the principal about the progress of their new-teacher mentees; the principal makes the final summative evaluation determination, based on his or her own observations and on the information provided by the Master Teachers. Table 4b summarizes the roles of the Master Teachers, principals, and PAR panels in the evaluation process of beginning teachers in each district.



**Table 4b. Roles of Master Teacher, principal, and PAR panel in evaluating beginning teachers, by district**

	<b>Austin</b>	<b>Long Beach</b>	<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>San Juan</b>	<b>Toledo</b>
<b>Support/Formative Assessment</b>					
<b>Master Teacher</b>	Exclusive responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility	Primary responsibility
<b>Principal</b>	Kept informed by Master Teacher	Consults with Master Teacher	Consults with Master Teacher	Consults with Master Teacher	Consults with Master Teacher
<b>PAR Panel</b>	n/a	n/a	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher	Provides oversight, advice to Master Teacher
<b>Summative Evaluation</b>					
<b>Master Teacher</b>	No role	Advice to principal	Advice to principal	Advice to principal	Advice to principal
<b>Principal</b>	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination	Conducts formal observations; Makes final determination
<b>PAR Panel</b>	n/a	n/a	Does not participate in new teacher summative evaluation	Does not participate in new teacher summative evaluation	Does not participate in new teacher summative evaluation

As noted above, the Master Teacher role is the only one found in all five districts.

- Four of five districts (all but San Juan) reported Staff Development Leader positions, while only two districts (Toledo and Long Beach) reported Project Leader positions. Department Chairs (middle and high school) and/or Grade-Level Team Leaders (elementary school) were identified by four of five districts (all but Toledo) as being Teacher Leader positions. Table 5 lists Teacher Leader positions organized by district, with abbreviated descriptions.

**Table 5. Overview of reported Teacher Leader positions, organized by district**

<b>Austin</b>
<p><b>Master Teachers</b> provide support, not evaluation, to new teachers only. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Full-Time Lead Mentors, Lead Mentors, Teacher Mentors</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Development Leaders</b> provide group staff development by content area. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Content Coaches and Disciplinary Literacy Teacher</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Project Leaders</b> have no positions identified.</p> <p><b>School-Site Leaders</b> provide management assistance and some informal support for struggling experienced teachers. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Grade-Level Team Leaders and Department Chairs</i></li> </ul>
<b>Long Beach</b>
<p><b>Master Teachers</b> provide support and primarily formative evaluation for new teachers and for struggling experienced teachers. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>PAR Consulting Teachers, Curriculum Coaches*</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Development Leaders</b> provide group staff development by content area and by school needs. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Curriculum Leaders, Curriculum Coaches,* and Site-Based Coaches</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Project Leaders</b> manage large, districtwide programs, such as Title I. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Program Facilitators</i></li> </ul> <p><b>School-Site Leaders</b> provide management assistance. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Grade-Level Team Leaders and Department Chairs</i></li> </ul>
<b>Montgomery County</b>
<p><b>Master Teachers</b> provide support (including formative evaluation) and summative evaluation for new teachers and for struggling experienced teachers. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>PAR Consulting Teachers and Mentors</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Development Leaders</b> provide assistance with individual teacher professional development plans and group staff development by content area. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Staff Development Teacher, Staff Development Specialist, Content Coaches and Specialists</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Project Leaders</b> have no positions identified.</p> <p><b>School-Site Leaders</b> provide management assistance. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Team Leaders</i></li> <li>• <i>Resource Teachers (i.e., Department Chairs)</i></li> </ul>
<b>San Juan</b>
<p><b>Master Teachers</b> provide support (including formative evaluation) and summative evaluation for new teachers and for struggling experienced teachers. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>PAR Consulting Teachers and Lead Teacher Consultants</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Development Leaders</b> have no positions identified.</p> <p><b>Project Leaders</b> have no positions identified.</p> <p><b>School-Site Leaders</b> provide leadership in instructional practice, professional development, and schoolwide initiatives; democratically elected by faculty. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Site Leadership Team Members and Department Chairs</i></li> </ul>
<b>Toledo</b>
<p><b>Master Teachers</b> provide support (including formative evaluation) and summative evaluation for new teachers and for struggling experienced teachers. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>PAR Intern Consulting Teachers</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Development Leaders</b> provide assistance with individual teacher professional development plans and staff development for teachers and schools. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Professional Development Leader, Instructional Planners,* Technical Trainers: Teacher Coaches, Support Teachers, and Intervention and Assessment Teachers</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Project Leaders</b> manage districtwide programs and complete smaller, discrete projects. Positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Instructional Planners* and TRACS<sup>4</sup> Teachers</i></li> </ul> <p><b>School-Site Leaders</b> have no positions identified.</p>

\* Denotes positions with activities in two categories.

<sup>4</sup> For a brief description of Toledo’s TRACS program, see footnote 5, above.

## What lessons have these districts learned from their experiences in using Teacher Leaders?

When asked about the lessons learned in developing and implementing the various Teacher Leader programs, district representatives were in general agreement, identifying the following as the most important lessons learned.

- **Training in additional skills needed for new Teacher Leader roles may be necessary.** Districts reported that it is essential to provide training to Master Teachers in peer communication skills for difficult conversations, such as “crucial confrontations” (Austin), report writing for documenting “the progress or regression” of peers (San Juan), and “observation and analysis of teaching” skills (Montgomery County). San Juan also suggests that administrators need support to adjust to the “change in administrative leadership roles and responsibilities.”
- **All affected stakeholders must be included in every aspect of Teacher Leader program development and implementation, especially unions and school principals.** Many Teacher Leader positions result in altered management roles and hierarchies, which may affect other positions as well. (This is especially true for Master Teachers who evaluate fellow teachers.) Districts reported that good relationships among all stakeholders should be cultivated continually. Montgomery County provided a representative summary of this process: “You really have to have [both] union buy-in and management buy-in, and that took a while. I mean, it took us two years to design the teacher leader system...And when we rolled it out...[we] went to every school and talked to every principal about implementing it. Initially principals felt, ‘Oh, my gosh, I’m losing my ability to evaluate people,’ but that was worked through.” San Juan provides the following advice on this point: “This is about [teacher] and school leadership control to improve the situation, and the two parties [unions and district administration] have to get together to figure out what ... kind of partnership works best to do that.”
- **When instituting Master Teacher positions, all involved must stay committed to the primary purpose of having such positions, which is to improve teaching and learning.** All four PAR districts reported that Master Teacher responsibilities include intensive support, as well as evaluation, for new and struggling teachers. Districts report that, as a result of their emphasis on support, more mentee teachers now meet minimum standards than under their prior support and evaluation systems. Further, the emphasis on intensive support combined with PAR panel review also resulted in less adversarial evaluation processes, when ineffective teachers were removed. Montgomery County described the changes that have occurred due to use of Master Teachers: Over the last 10 years with PAR, “there are more people who are underperforming who are getting help, and if they don’t [improve] they either resign or they are dismissed.” Long Beach described the impact of Master Teachers and Teacher Leaders generally: “I don’t think we would have been able to implement the reforms we have done in the last decade or more without [Teacher Leaders’] support and their knowledge base and without their ability to go into classrooms and give teachers high-quality feedback.”

## **Conclusion**

Participating districts reported that Master Teacher and Staff Development Leader positions are an integral component of their systems for improving classroom practice. Master Teachers provided intensive support to new and struggling experienced teachers to assist them to meet or exceed minimum standards of practice, while Staff Development Leaders assisted all teachers to continually improve their teaching. Teacher Leaders conducted other activities as well. Two districts reported having Teacher Leaders who work as Project Leaders, managing large district programs. Four of the five districts also described the positions of Department Chair and Grade-Level Team Leader as Teacher Leader positions.

All five districts described the improved effectiveness of having Teacher Leaders, who are respected, accomplished teachers who work with their fellow teachers, both for improving classroom practices and, when necessary, removing teachers who continue to be ineffective. They also stated that this is a fundamental change in their district structures: responsibilities have been formally distributed from principals to Teacher Leaders and many Teacher Leader positions, especially Master Teacher positions, are created with the expectation that participants will return to the classroom rather than move to a formal administrative position. The structural changes required to fully integrate the use of Teacher Leader positions, particularly Master Teacher positions, required multi-year development work involving all stakeholders, new types of training for many Teacher Leaders and administrators, and ongoing relationship-building activities.

## **Methods**

REL West researchers investigated districts that have innovative Teacher Leader programs as part of their non-traditional management systems. The particular districts reviewed were suggested by our key informants or emerged as districts of interest from a review of materials available online, such as program websites, program guidebooks, union contracts, evaluations, and case studies. This search provided contextual information that reduced the burden on respondents and prepared interviewers to ask relevant questions to confirm and supplement publicly available information. We included districts for which we could find comprehensive information during the project period and programs implemented within the whole district, rather than just in individual schools.

Researchers made initial contact with districts via phone and email, describing the project scope and purpose. After developing a standardized interview protocol, with open-ended and semi-structured questions, we conducted one interview (between 45 and 90 minutes) with a representative who was identified as “most knowledgeable” by either our expert contacts or district representatives in each of the five districts (in San Juan we spoke to a union representative). Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using an inductive coding method. An initial draft of this report was presented to the district representatives for comment. Their comments were incorporated into the final draft.

Finally, this response represents a synthesis of information collected from selected materials and from one interview in each district; conducting a more systematic document review and interviews with additional district representatives might yield additional information and considerations.

## **Selected resources**

### ***Reports and resources reviewed***

Burns, S., Gardner, C., and Meeuwse, J. (2009, August). *An interim evaluation of teacher and principal experiences during the pilot phase of AISD REACH*. National Center on Performance Incentives.

Harvard Graduate School of Education. Project on the Next Generation of Teachers. (n.d.) *A user's guide to Peer Assistance Review (PAR)*.  
<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/par/parinfo/>

Koppich, J. (2008, September). *Strategic management of human capital – Long Beach*. Madison, WI: CPRE.

Koppich, J. (2009, October). *Strategic management of human capital – Toledo: Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)*. Madison, WI: CPRE.

Montgomery County Education Association. (n.d.) *Teachers working together to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teacher's guide to the Peer Assistance and Review Program and the New Teacher Evaluation System*. Rockville, MD: Author. Downloaded May 10, 2010, from [http://mcea.nea.org/pdf/PAR-FINAL\(0805\).pdf](http://mcea.nea.org/pdf/PAR-FINAL(0805).pdf)

### ***Contacts in each district***

The following individuals were identified as key contacts for each district's Teacher Leader program and interviewed for this paper:

- Melinda Rodriguez, Professional Development Specialist, Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas  
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- Elisa Hagen, Program Specialist, Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach, California  
[EHagen@lbusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:EHagen@lbusd.k12.ca.us) or 562-997-8000 x2902
- Susan Marks, Associate Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland  
[Susan\\_Marks@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Susan_Marks@mcpsmd.org) or 301-279-3270
- Tom Alves, Executive Director, San Juan Teachers Association, Carmichael, California  
[Talves@sjta.org](mailto:Talves@sjta.org) or 916-487-SJTA

- Jan Kilbride, Chief Academic Officer, Toledo Public Schools, Toledo, Ohio  
[jan.kilbride@tps.org](mailto:jan.kilbride@tps.org) or 419-671-8422

### ***Links to relevant district information***

#### **Austin**

- Austin Independent School District  
<http://www.austinisd.org/>
- Teacher Leadership Development Program  
[http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/teachers/teacher\\_leadership/](http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/teachers/teacher_leadership/)
- Mentor Teacher Program  
<http://www.austinisd.org/teachers/mentorteacher/>

#### **Long Beach**

- Long Beach Unified School District  
<http://www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/>
- Long Beach Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)  
[http://www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/Main\\_Offices/Curriculum/Professional\\_Development/peer\\_assistance.cfm](http://www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/Main_Offices/Curriculum/Professional_Development/peer_assistance.cfm)

#### **Montgomery County**

- Montgomery County Public Schools  
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/>
- Staff Development Teacher Project  
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/development/teams/sdt/sdt.shtm>

#### **San Juan**

- San Juan Unified School District  
<http://www.sanjuan.edu/about.cfm?subpage=1>

#### **Toledo**

- Toledo Public Schools  
<http://www.tps.org/>

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educators and policymakers in the Western region (Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) at WestEd. This memorandum was prepared by REL West under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-06-CO-0014, administered by WestEd. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.