Teacher Leadership in Massachusetts: Roles, Opportunities and Gaps

November 2019
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At the request of the Barr Foundation, and with their support, Education First researched the teacher leadership landscape in Massachusetts.

The **goals** of this research were to:
- understand the breadth of existing programs and opportunities available to Massachusetts teacher leaders,
- identify where and how these opportunities link together to create pathways for teacher leaders, and
- pinpoint gaps in the current ecosystem.

**Process:** This research was informed by a review of the national research on teacher leadership, interviews with local and national leaders, and focus groups with Massachusetts leaders.

This document is a summary of that research, and includes one potential framework to think about pathways for teacher leaders. It does not represent a comprehensive view of every role and opportunity available to teacher leaders in Massachusetts, and captures only a snapshot in time. The tools in this document can be used in whatever ways are most helpful to those in the field.
To fully explore current teacher leadership opportunities in Massachusetts, and understand how they interconnect to create leadership pathways, we explored five key areas:

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<th>Areas of Focus</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
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<td>What is a teacher leader? How does that definition vary across the state?</td>
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<td>Opportunities currently available</td>
<td>What are the existing opportunities for teacher leadership in Massachusetts?</td>
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<td>Critical needs or gaps across the state</td>
<td>What needs to be improved or changed about teacher leadership in Massachusetts? What are the gaps and how could they be addressed?</td>
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Research Methodology. Multiple stakeholders and research sources informed the answers to these questions:

In addition to desk research, Education First interviewed and held focus groups with both national and local leaders:

- Teacher Leaders
- Organizations Supporting Teacher Leaders
- State Education Department
- District and School System Leaders
- Funders
Massachusetts Context
Teachers matter. Research shows clearly that teachers have a greater impact on student achievement than any other in-school factor.

When it comes to student performance on reading and math tests, teachers have the greatest impact of any other school factor.

Students perform better in schools with the highest levels of instructional leadership and teacher leadership.

When teachers are involved in decision-making processes related to school improvement planning and student conduct policies, students learn more.

Teacher leadership can help address the dual problems of diversifying the teacher pipeline and reducing attrition.

**Teachers can play a pivotal role in transforming schools, improving policies and creating systems that meet the needs of teachers and students**

- Principals are overburdened and carrying the weight of instructional quality and improvement along with the other core functions of running a school.
- Expanded teacher leadership roles, integrated into the school’s mission, can improve the support provided to educators and help them feel more successful in their work.

**Teachers across the country are already taking on these roles**

- 25% of teachers nationally have taken on formal or informal leadership roles in their schools or districts.
- 35 states now have formal teacher leadership policies to create more opportunities for classroom teachers.

Sources: Beirly et al. (2016), NCTQ Databurst: Teacher Leadership Opportunities (2019)
Research suggests that students of color assigned to a teacher who shares their race perform better, but the state’s teacher population has remained largely white*

Sources: MA DESE State Report Card, Gershenson et al. (2017)

*Additional slides with data related to student and teacher diversity are included in the Appendix.
The challenge of creating a pipeline of diverse, talented teacher leaders is exacerbated by attrition, which is particularly high in rural and high need districts.

Massachusetts Teacher Retention Rates 2018

Statewide 87%

Williamsburg 69%
Holyoke 69%
Southbridge 84%
Boston 84%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2018)
Across the state, local districts – and in some cases, schools – leverage teacher leaders in different and unique ways to improve schools and benefit students.

Schools in the Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership have an elected Teacher Leadership Team (TLT), which is charged with writing an annual School Operating Plan. The plan must include any policy initiatives or changes in addition to a clear action plan for addressing instructional needs.

In North Andover, teachers participate in dedicated collaboration time led by Facilitators of Collaborative Inquiry (FCIs). FCIs define and create collaborative meeting agendas, support their colleagues in conversations about student work and intentionally seek feedback on their own practice to model improvement.

Worcester has created the role of Innovative Teacher Leaders, known as iTeachers, are full time teachers with extensive technology knowledge who serve as digital learning teacher-leaders in schools.

The Revere Educators Leadership Board (RELB) is made up of 80 teachers and administrators from all levels and all schools across the district. This board engages in strategic decision-making and its subcommittees review decisions relating to everything from hiring to instruction.
Examining Teacher Leadership in Massachusetts
Key Themes. Research identified common themes around how teacher leadership in Massachusetts is defined, what it looks like when implemented well, and areas for growth (1/3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition: What is a teacher leader? How does that definition vary across the state?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Definitions vary widely. Roles fall along a spectrum ranging from efforts that impact instruction to efforts that impact policy.</td>
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<th>Qualities: What are the most important qualities of a strong teacher leader?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key qualities include a deep commitment to a vision, content expertise, skill in working with adults, confidence and humility.</td>
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</table>
**Key Themes.** Research identified common themes around how teacher leadership in Massachusetts is defined, what it looks like when implemented well, and areas for growth (2/3)

**Conditions:** What are the conditions necessary for teacher leaders to be successful?

**Enabling conditions** for teacher leaders to be best positioned to succeed include dedicated time, resources, and leadership support.

**Opportunities:** What are the existing opportunities for teacher leadership in Massachusetts?

**Opportunities** to grow leadership skills are available to teachers who know where to look, but many are virtual; most focus on school and/or district-level positions vs. classroom-specific roles.
Key Themes. Research identified common themes around how teacher leadership in Massachusetts is defined, what it looks like when implemented well, and areas for growth (3/3)

Critical Needs: What needs to be improved or changed about teacher leadership in this state? What are the gaps and how could they be addressed?

Critical needs for teacher leaders to grow include more in-person programming, schedule adjustments to allow for time to lead and less juggling, role clarity, an ongoing investment in their growth, and continued support.
Definitions Vary. Massachusetts has no set definition for “teacher leader” and stakeholders have slightly different takes on what the role entails.

“A teacher leader is someone who is trying to help improve teaching and learning **beyond what is happening between them and their students.**”

“**A teacher leader is someone who is connected to other teachers in the building...** someone who actually **digs into the facts** and tries to be **solutions-oriented.**”

“**When teachers are leaders, they lead and influence the climate and culture of teachers and students in the school.**”

“A teacher leader is **not just someone who helps students achieve,** but also someone who can create exceptional relationships with families and develop new programs.”

“[A teacher leader is] a **vision-oriented and organizationally competent** person who knows how to work with/for people, navigate systems, and exemplifies knowledge in their field.”
Key Qualities. Stakeholders say most successful teacher leaders possess common critical qualities, including:

Teacher leaders need to have a **passion for education**, be open to new ideas, and be deeply committed to a vision.

They need to be **consensus builders, skilled listeners**, and able to work with adults as well as students.

Teacher leaders need to **exude both confidence in their practice and humility** in what they still have to learn.

“They have **deep alignment to what we’re trying to do**. They have to be aligned to our **vision broadly** and to the fact that they’re working in a K12 system, not individual classroom.”

“They have to know how to work with adults. They can **set up a creative agenda, facilitate, navigate micro-politics**, etc.”

“There is a sense that you need to be stoic as a teacher. A teacher leader can **ask a question that reveals that they haven’t ‘got it’ all the time**, and that things are not always smooth in their classroom.”
**Enabling Conditions.** Teacher leaders are most successful when they have dedicated time, resources, and are enabled to make decisions.

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<th>Leadership support</th>
<th>Empowering school culture</th>
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<td>“To be successful [teacher leaders] need a school/district leader who embraces teacher leadership and wants to have shared/distributed leadership. <strong>You need a principal who says they cannot do this alone and builds up teachers to be fellow leaders of the school.</strong>”</td>
<td>“Successful teacher leadership requires a culture that embraces teacher values, and <strong>empowers them to truly be partners</strong> in the design and implementation of the school model.”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A seat at the table</th>
<th>The ability to keep teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td>“You cannot be a teacher leader and have voice in district decisions if you’re not <strong>engaged in the decision-making process</strong>. It’s not legitimate if they don’t have that space.”</td>
<td>“Teacher leaders need the kind of positions and jobs that <strong>enhance and maximize their ability to be a good teacher</strong>. They simply cannot leave that behind.”</td>
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Critical Needs. Stakeholders say that being empowered to lead, and having time, role clarity and focused investments are critical areas for growth

Teachers need **time built into their schedules to lead** so they do not need to choose between leadership roles and their classroom.

“**There has to be time. We have to remove the “stuff” from a teacher’s schedule to [give them the] time and brain space for doing these other things.”**

Teacher leaders need to have **role clarity, clear objectives and be empowered** to make meaningful decisions.

“We should tie every penny or minute spent on some quantitative student learning goal. That would ensure that we’re not doing this just for the sake of teacher leadership.”

Teacher leadership requires **sustained attention and investment** even when its impact is not immediately apparent.

“We need sustained attention on this. This is the kind of area where its remarkably hard to see the outcomes. You give the teachers an opportunity but the results won’t be immediately apparent.”
More Access is Needed. Stakeholders say there is a lack of consistency in how they can learn about, participate in, access, and even pay for relevant opportunities.

**There is no central way to learn about relevant opportunities**

“In the Boston area there are a lot of teacher leadership opportunities but elsewhere it’s just a lot harder.”

“People find out about teacher leadership opportunities through social media because it’s the most cost effective way to reach teachers directly.”

**Barriers to participate in opportunities need to be addressed and removed**

“There needs to be a way to find leadership opportunities and lower that barrier to entry of time. Finding a way to do that would make it easier for other levels of teachers to have access to leadership opportunities.”

“There need to be more opportunities. Currently, the barriers are time and funding and teachers need more supports during the school day…the more formalized the structures are the better it is.”
Current Opportunities. Most in-person opportunities for learning are clustered in the Greater Boston area or statewide; there is a gap of programming in western, central and southeastern Massachusetts.
Pathways to Teacher Leadership
Leadership Pathways. Each teacher’s career milestones are unique and personal, but there are five common* pathways to leadership

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Opportunities to…</th>
<th>Peer Development</th>
<th>Content and Data</th>
<th>Thought Leadership and Recognition</th>
<th>Engagement and Culture</th>
<th>Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead efforts to improve how students are supported to learn.</td>
<td>Lead efforts to improve what students are learning.</td>
<td>Build understanding of and support for the profession, and contribute to a broader conversation about student achievement by communicating with and connecting to other educators.</td>
<td>Lead efforts to engage with parents and the community to improve school culture, climate, and supports.</td>
<td>Advocate for, inform, and strengthen new and existing policies and rules at the school, system and state level to improve how schools operate and expand opportunities for student success.</td>
<td></td>
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* The pathways detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of existing opportunities and roles across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific roles or opportunities that are not included.
These pathways interconnect to create unique roles and learning opportunities to allow teachers to build their practice, thrive as leaders and increase their impact.

**PATHWAYS FOR TEACHER LEADERS TO IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

The pathways detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of existing opportunities and roles across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific roles or opportunities that are not included.
The teacher leadership framework illustrates potential areas of impact, differentiates between roles and how the pathways link together.

Potential areas of impact start in the classroom, and then expand to the school, district or state/national level.

Spectrum differentiates between roles primarily focused on curriculum and instructional matters, and roles that focus on policies and procedures.

Pathways are interlocked like puzzle pieces to illustrate the fluidity between them.
This framework could be used in multiple ways

**Teachers** can use this to reflect on potential opportunities within their school and district, and work with their peers and mentors to map out their professional growth pathway.

**School and district leaders** can use this to highlight the roles and opportunities currently available, identify areas where additions are needed, and to encourage staff to develop professional growth plans.

**State leaders** can use this to map out existing roles and opportunities to inform and support the field.

**Partner organizations and funders** can use this to inform their decisions around strategic investments and growth to fill existing and anticipated gaps.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Roles</strong></th>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
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| Peer Development: Lead efforts to improve how students are supported to learn. | 1 = Brandeis Teacher Leadership Program  
2 = Lynch Leadership Academy Fellowship  
3 = Salem State Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership  
4 = Westfield State University Mentor Training Program |
| Content and Data: Lead efforts to improve what students are learning. | 5 = Better Math Teaching Network  
6 = Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program  
7 = DESE OPTIC Content Fellows  
8 = Digital Literacy and Computer Science Ambassador Fellowship  
9 = EdTech Team Teacher Leader Cohorts  
10 = FUSE MA Fellowship  
11 = Massachusetts CURATE Curriculum Fellowship  
12 = Project Lead the Way Learning Teams,  
13 = Salem State Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership |
| Thought Leadership and Recognition: Build understanding of and support for the profession, and contribute to a broader conversation about student achievement by communicating with and connecting to other educators. | 14 = Boston EdTalks  
15 = Educator Showcase  
16 = MASS Ideas  
17 = The Teacher Collaborative  
18 = Massachusetts Teacher of the Year  
19 = Teachers Connect  
20 = Teach to Lead  
21 = Total Teacher Project |
| Engagement and Culture: Lead efforts to engage with parents and the community to improve school culture, climate, and supports. | 22 = Boston Educators 4 Equity  
23 = Equity for All  
24 = Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools  
25 = TAG Boston |
| Policy: Advocate for, inform, and strengthen new and existing policies and rules at the school, system and state level to improve how schools operate and expand opportunities for student success. | 26 = AFT-BTU Policy Fellowship  
27 = Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program  
28 = Commonwealth Teaching Policy Fellowship  
29 = DESE Teacher Advisory Cabinet  
30 = E4E-Boston Teacher Leadership Program  
31 = MTA Next Generation Leadership Program  
32 = MTA Teacher Leadership Institute |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Roles</strong></th>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
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</table>
| A = Mentor Teacher  
B = Master Teacher  
C = Instructional Leader | 1 = Brandeis Teacher Leadership Program  
2 = Lynch Leadership Academy Fellowship  
3 = Salem State Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership  
4 = Westfield State University Mentor Training Program |
| D = Content/Data Coach  
E = Content Lead  
F = Data Lead Teacher  
G = District Content/Curriculum Advisory Council  
H = Technology Advisor | 5 = Better Math Teaching Network  
6 = Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program  
7 = DESE OPTIC Content Fellows  
8 = Digital Literacy and Computer Science Ambassador Fellowship  
9 = EdTech Team Teacher Leader Cohorts  
10 = FUSE MA Fellowship  
11 = Massachusetts CURATE Curriculum Fellowship  
12 = Project Lead the Way Learning Teams,  
13 = Salem State Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership |
| I = Educator Influencer (via social media, blogs, OpEds, etc)  
• I1 = School-based thought leader  
• I2 = District-wide thought leader  
• I3 = Statewide thought leader  
J = Locally or National Recognized Teacher  
• J1 = Locally recognized teacher  
• J2 = Nationally recognized teacher (STOY, etc) | 14 = Boston EdTalks  
15 = Educator Showcase  
16 = MASS Ideas  
17 = The Teacher Collaborative  
18 = Massachusetts Teacher of the Year  
19 = Teachers Connect  
20 = Teach to Lead  
21 = Total Teacher Project |
| K = Student Services  
• K1 = School-based Director of Student Services  
• K2 = Director of Student Advisory Council  
• K3 = District-Level Director of Equity  
L = Head of Family and Community Engagement  
M = Member of School Design Team  
N = Student Advocate | 22 = Boston Educators 4 Equity  
23 = Equity for All  
24 = Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools  
25 = TAG Boston |
| O = Policy Advisor  
• O1 = School Level Policy Advisor  
• O2 = District-Level Policy Advisor  
• O3 = State-Level Policy Advisor  
P = Policy Activist  
Q = School Ambassador  
R = Union Representative  
• R1 = School Union Representative  
• R2 = Regional Union Representative  
• R3 = State Union Representative  
S = Administration  
• S1 = School Leader  
• S2 = District Leader | 26 = AFT-BTU Policy Fellowship  
27 = Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program  
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Roles along each pathway allow for continued growth from the classroom to the school, district and state level.

PATHWAYS FOR TEACHER LEADERS TO IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A complete resource map of the roles and opportunities included in this compilation is available online.
Opportunities currently available – both in person and online – are largely focused on training for leadership further from the classroom at the school, district, and state level.

A complete resource map of the roles and opportunities included in this compilation is available online.
When pieced together, gaps emerge in opportunities to prepare teachers for leadership closest to the classroom; training related to content and policy is widely available.

A complete resource map of the roles and opportunities included in this compilation is available online.
For each pathway we have identified local roles and opportunities available for teachers to practice and improve their leadership skills to impact student achievement.

**Classroom practice leaders lead efforts to improve how students are learning**

**ROLES**
- **Mentor Teacher**: Serves as role model and coach to a new teacher
- **Master Teacher**: Coach and support other teachers and model instructional excellence to provide and maintain high levels of quality for all students
- **Instructional Leader**: Help colleagues to implement effective teaching strategies in a specific subject or for a specific student population

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Brandeis Teacher Leadership Program
- Lynch Leadership Academy Fellowship
- Salem State University Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership
- Westfield State University Mentor Teaching Program

Training and fellowship opportunities* made available to educators across multiple districts to strengthen leadership skills. Some provide the necessary training to support teachers along more than one pathway.

*A opportunities are meant to be representative of what is available across Massachusetts, and is not a fully exhaustive list. Locally developed professional development programs are not included.

A complete resource map detailing all of the roles and opportunities highlighted in the following slides is available online in a format that can be easily accessed and regularly updated.
Leaders in peer development lead and model efforts to improve how students are supported to learn

**ROLES**

- **Mentor Teacher:** Serves as role model and coach to a new teacher
- **Master Teacher:** Coach and support other teachers and model instructional excellence to provide and maintain high levels of quality for all students.
- **Instructional Leader:** Help colleagues to implement effective teaching strategies in a specific subject or for a specific student population.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Brandeis Teacher Leadership Program
- Lynch Leadership Academy Fellowship
- Salem State University Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership
- Westfield State University Mentor Teaching Program

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
Higher education programs offer the best options for teachers who want to pursue this pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brandeis University Teacher Leadership Program.</strong></td>
<td>The program provides elementary and secondary teachers the knowledge and skills they need to motivate and mentor fellow teachers, collaborate with administrators, orchestrate school reform and influence education policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lynch Leadership Academy Fellowship.</strong></td>
<td>The fellowship combines rigorous professional development with individualized coaching, helping sitting and aspiring principals to improve outcomes, increase opportunities, and disrupt inequities in their buildings, particularly in under-resourced communities. The integration of coaching and professional development supports Fellows in implementing new learning immediately and effectively in their schools, culminating in transformative change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salem State University Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership.</strong></td>
<td>The program supports current and future teacher leaders in a one-year, four-course sequence. Educators learn the art of facilitation, professional learning design, data-informed decision making and action research—all competencies needed to effectively serve in informal and formal teacher leadership roles at the school level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Westfield State University Mentor Teaching Program.</strong></td>
<td>An online, interactive instructor taught course is designed for educators who have a leadership role in their district’s mentoring program, such as district mentor coordinators, human resource personnel, head mentors, or other district administrators. Through readings, research, and discussion, the course will guide the participants through a process for evaluating their current mentoring program and develop an action plan to improve the program so that it is in compliance with DESE guidelines for mentoring programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
Districts including Boston and Fall River are leveraging teacher leaders as mentors to support the growth and development of their peers.

In Fall River, teacher leaders serve as mentors for new teachers. The district also uses the Professional Teacher Supplement Compensation to encourage teachers to accept leadership roles and engage in professional practice by stretching their skills.

In Methuen, experienced teachers serve as mentors in the new teacher induction program. They are compensated with a stipend and participate in a graduate course along with attending monthly mentor seminars. They are selected by principals and union officers.

Westfield State University offers a Mentor Training Program with online, interactive courses that guide educators through a process for evaluating their current mentoring program and developing an action plan to improve the program.

The Boston Public School District offers the Peer Assistance Review program, which provides coaching, support, and evaluation for not-yet proficient teachers in Boston Public Schools.
Program Spotlight: Westfield State University Mentor Training Course

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Westfield State University provides a mentor training course. One for educators to build the skills and competencies needed to be effective mentors to new teachers. Additionally, they offer a course for educators who have been in the classroom for five years or longer and hold a leadership position in a district mentoring program.

PATHWAY OPPORTUNITY

This opportunity prepares educators to be a mentor or master teacher. Through the courses educators learn from readings, research and discussions educators learning the skills to be a mentor or how to evaluate their current mentor program and create an action plan to improve the program.
Content and data leaders oversee efforts to improve what students are learning

**ROLES**

- **Content/Data Coach:** Help teachers interpret student data and identify instructional strategies; Facilitate staff professional development; Provide on-the-job development
- **Content Lead:** Act as liaison between administration and colleagues (may include instructional leadership and administrative duties); Lead teachers to develop standards and follow curriculum
- **Data Lead Teacher:** Provide professional learning to enhance instruction, facilitate technology-based workshops and offer digital teaching strategies
- **District Content/Curriculum Advisory Council**
  Collaborate with teacher leaders and administrators to make district-wide decisions, pilots new initiatives and programs and solve problems that sustain high teaching expertise
- **Technology Advisor:** Provide counsel to district and state leaders based on the technological needs in schools

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program
- DESE Optic Content Fellows
- Salem State University Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership
- CURATE Curriculum Fellowship
- Project Lead the Way Learning Teams
- EdTech Team Teacher Leader Cohorts
- FUSE MA Fellowship

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are many opportunities available to educators who want to pursue this pathway at the local or state level

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<thead>
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<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program.</strong></td>
<td>The program develops the leadership capacity of teachers who hold leadership roles through a series of graduate-level, practice-based courses that enable them to connect across schools and strengthen the leadership skills they need for the roles they share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESE Optic Content Fellows.</strong></td>
<td>A selective group of highly effective teachers, leaders, coaches, and teacher educators are brought together to establish “benchmark” scoring and exemplars of written feedback for the OPTIC Platform for Teaching and Informed Calibration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salem State University Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership.</strong></td>
<td>The program supports current and future teacher leaders in a one-year, four-course sequence. Educators learn the art of facilitation, professional learning design, data-informed decision making and action research—all competencies needed to effectively serve in informal and formal teacher leadership roles at the school level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURATE Curriculum Fellowship (DESE, Teach Plus, Rennie Center).</strong></td>
<td>A highly selective leadership opportunity for outstanding Massachusetts teachers interested in deepening their knowledge of curricular quality &amp; alignment and contributing to the development of resources that affect students and the teaching profession. Fellows work in panel teams and are guided through a review of existing evidence on the quality &amp; alignment of core curricular materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Lead the Way Learning Teams.</strong></td>
<td>A STEM curriculum and professional development provider. To support the initiative, Mass STEM Hub creates learning teams designed so educators can connect and collaborate to discuss their practice and work with peers to solve problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EdTech Team Teacher Leader Cohorts.</strong></td>
<td>Cohorts for teachers to learn how to make a difference in their classroom and change their learning environment. Focus is put on the ideals of Courageous Leadership, Empowerment, Student Agency, Inspiring Spaces, and an Engaged Community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUSE MA Fellowship.</strong></td>
<td>A grant-funded initiative that strives to share, implement, evaluate, and scale blended learning by connecting educators across district lines. They assemble a “dream team” of Fellows made up of educators and administrators who are experts at personalization and match them with another district to assess readiness, analyze data, and help disseminate best blended learning practices based on each district’s specific needs.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In Fall River, each school in the district creates a teacher leader position, which are annually reviewed by a committee. The teacher leaders are selected by principals, in consultation with teachers, and are paid an additional stipend.

Salem State University offers a Graduate Certificate in Teacher Leadership to support current and future leaders in the skills necessary for facilitation, professional learning design, data-informed decision making and action research so they can serve in informal and formal teacher leadership roles at the school level.

In North Andover, Facilitators of Collaborative Inquiry (FCIs) create and facilitate a collaborative team meetings. In addition to organizing meetings, FCIs communicate with supervisors about team goals and prepare as well facilitate collaborative initiatives with administrators.

Teaching and Learning Specialists at New Bedford School District support teachers through coaching. They are selected through an application and demonstration of strong instructional practices as well as their ability to support others.
**Program Spotlight: CURATE Curriculum Fellowship**

**Program Overview**

The CURATE Curriculum Fellowship is offered through DESE, Teach Plus and the Rennie Center. Through the Fellowship, educators meet to **review curriculum and ensure alignment to standards** as well as effective implementation. From this, a series of reports are issued to provide guidance to districts and schools in their selection of curricular materials.

**Pathway Opportunity**

This opportunity prepares educators to be a **content coach, content lead, instructional leader** and/or participate in a **district content/curriculum advisory council**. Through the Fellowship educators build their content and curriculum expertise as well as get to contribute to content and resource development.
Thought leaders actively communicate about innovations and lessons learned to connect with other teachers and contribute to a broader conversation.

**ROLES**

- **Teacher Excellence Thought Leader:** Share expertise with teachers at the district, state and national levels; generate thought leadership and advocate for changes that improve the teaching profession.

- **Educator Influencer:** Share expertise and learnings through informal channels including Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook and blogs.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Boston Ed Talks
- Educator Showcase
- TeachersConnect
- The Teacher Collaborative
- Teacher of the Year
- Total Teacher Project

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are opportunities designed to support educators who pursue the thought leadership and recognition pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boston Ed Talks.</strong></td>
<td>Teachers from the Greater Boston area publicly present on their ideas, lessons learned and innovations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 District Partnership Educator Showcase.</strong></td>
<td>A celebration and recognition for educators in the Five District Partnership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers Connect.</strong></td>
<td>A free online community for teachers to share ideas, ask questions, and collaborate with their peers in other schools, districts and states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Teacher Collaborative.</strong></td>
<td>The Teachers Collaborative offers a series of drop-in networking events and co-lab inquiry groups across school districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Massachusetts Teacher of the Year.</strong></td>
<td>Each year the Massachusetts Teacher of the Year (TOY) program honors a Massachusetts teacher who exemplifies excellent teaching in the Commonwealth. Beyond celebrating the individual, the program looks at the complex work that is involved in educating all students through highlighting student achievement, commitment to the profession, innovations in education, and teacher leadership. It draws attention to issues of teacher quality and reiterates the importance of the teacher as the single most important school-based factor in improving student outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Total Teacher Project.</strong></td>
<td>The Total Teacher Project hosts events that connect leadership development experts to teachers. Additionally, the organization has hosted a Teacher Leadership Institute over the summer in the past.</td>
</tr>
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The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are examples of educators serving as thought leaders across the state.

The Teachers Collaborative offers teachers a series of drop-in networking events and co-lab inquiry groups across schools.

Massachusetts annually awards the Teacher of the Year Award to an educator that exemplifies excellent teaching. The award draws attention to issues of teacher quality and reiterates the importance of the teacher.

MASS Ideas brings people together to learn from each other, share ideas and turn big ideas into great idea.
Program Spotlight: The Teacher Collaborative

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Teacher Collaborative works to bring educators together to share ideas, learn from one another, and feel empowered to reimagine the profession and ultimately transform learning for all students.

PATHWAY OPPORTUNITY

Participants in the Educator Exchange or Co-Lab professional development opportunities can become educator influencers or thought leaders by networking with their peers and sharing what they have learned either in person or through virtual forums.
Engagement and culture leaders lead efforts to engage with parents and the community in order to improve school culture, climate and support.

### ROLES

- **Equity Lead Teacher**: Champion equity across departments and support teachers to individualize their student goals, assignments and feedback based on the unique needs of all students.

- **Family, Community and Alumni Engagement Lead**: Establish and maintain partnerships with external members of the school community to support school-wide goals (through grant funding, donations, advocacy, participation or volunteerism).

- **School Design Team**: Engage in activities with other school leaders to develop a better school and governance model.

- **Student Advocate**: Empower and provide guidance for students to advance academically, socially and emotionally to become well-rounded citizens.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Boston Educators for Equity
- Equity For All PD Day
- Mass IDEAS
- Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools
- TAG Boston

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are opportunities designed to support educators who pursue the engagement and culture pathway

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston Educators for Equity.</td>
<td>Educators meet in small groups to engage in dialogue and storytelling about: identity, specifically focusing on race, patterns of privilege and oppression, interventions and action steps for classrooms and schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 District Partnership Equity for All PD Day.</td>
<td>A day of professional development focused on equity, with presentations from teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass IDEAS.</td>
<td>Mass IDEAS brings people together to learn from each other, share ideas, and turn big ideas into great schools. They are focused on helping the people of Massachusetts reimagine public schools and design and launch innovative, high-quality school models for their communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools.</td>
<td>Through the program teachers develop the skills and historical understanding to lead courageous conversations about race, power, and equity in their school community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAG Boston.</td>
<td>TAG Boston is an ongoing, ever-growing network and community of teachers, educators, community members, parents, and activists working for social justice inside and outside our schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are examples of educators serving as engagement and culture leaders across the state.

The Harvard Graduate School of Education offers the *Race, Equity and Leadership in School* program to aid teachers in developing the skills and historical understanding to lead courageous conversations about race, power and equity in their school community.

**Boston Educators for Equity** provides educators a space to meet in small groups to discuss identity, focusing on race, patterns of privilege and oppression, interventions and action steps for classrooms and schools.

In Chicopee, the *Instructional Leadership Team*, a group of educators and administrators, meet once a month to discuss school culture and instructional practices to inform solutions to obstacles schools are facing.

**Fall River** has a *School Design and Turnaround Team* composed of educators who are trained in strategies to support low-performing schools. Each cohort of teachers has a coach embedded in the school.

**Boston Educators for Equity** provides educators a space to meet in small groups to discuss identity, focusing on race, patterns of privilege and oppression, interventions and action steps for classrooms and schools.

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**Fall River** has a *School Design and Turnaround Team* composed of educators who are trained in strategies to support low-performing schools. Each cohort of teachers has a coach embedded in the school.
Program Spotlight: Mass IDEAS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mass IDEAS brings people together to learn from one another and share ideas to reimagine public schools in Massachusetts. They offer a School Design Institute where participants learn about new learning models and design thinking to develop solutions to the challenges facing their community.

PATHWAY OPPORTUNITY

This opportunity prepares educators to take a lead role on the School Design Team, to advocate for students and to lead on family and community engagement. Participants in the Mass IDEAS program learn school design skills and ideate on new concepts that are built around the supports that students need to be successful.
Policy leaders advocate for, inform new, and strengthen existing policies and rules to improve how schools operate and expand opportunities for student success

- **Policy Advisor:** Share insights, suggestions and feedback with district and state policy makers to help refine current policies and inform the development of new policies and resources
- **Policy Activist:** Engage in shared political education and relationship building to achieve educational justice in local communities
- **School Ambassador:** Advocate for district policies that support school needs
- **Teacher’s Union Representative:** Inform teachers about union issues and activities, listen to teacher needs and advocate on behalf of teachers in the school, region or state, offer a wide range of collegial support to new teachers

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- AFT-BTU Policy Fellowship
- Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program
- Commonwealth Teaching Policy Fellowship
- DESE Teacher Advisory Cabinet
- MTA Next Generation Leadership Program
- MTA Teacher Leadership Institute
- E4E-Boston Teacher Leadership Program

The pathways, roles, and opportunities detailed throughout this guide represent an illustrative compilation of what is currently available across Massachusetts. This list is not exhaustive, so there may be other district-specific pathways, roles, or opportunities that are not included.
There are opportunities designed to support educators who pursue the policy pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFT-BTU Policy Fellowship.</td>
<td>The Fellowship helps educators advocate for students and the profession as well as engage with state and local education policy makers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESE Teacher Advisory Cabinet.</td>
<td>Members apply to participate; those who are selected share their insights, suggestions and feedback with the DESE to help refine current policies and inform the development of new policies and resources at the state level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators for Excellence Teacher Leadership Program.</td>
<td>The program allows teachers to explore how to build relationships and influence within their schools, union, communities, and networks; learn to assess the policy and political landscape for opportunities to create positive change; and become more dynamic speakers about their own insights, experiences, and recommendations to key players in education policymaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTA Leadership Institute.</td>
<td>Through the Institute, teachers hone their expertise and engage in leadership work in schools, state houses and associations throughout the country. The Institute prepares teachers to serve as a leader of the profession with the knowledge, skills and core values to meet new demands as a 21st-century teaching professional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTA Next Generation Leadership Program.</td>
<td>The program is focused on teaching participatory and inclusive strategies to broaden member union engagement. The program helps participants understand the fundamentals of outreach, recruitment, involvement, strategy development, decision-making, and planning for direct action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Plus Commonwealth Teaching Policy Fellowship.</td>
<td>A Fellowship for educators to deepen their knowledge around education policy and promote teacher voice and advocacy in policy discussions that affect students and the teaching profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers 21 Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate Program.</td>
<td>The program develops the capacity of teachers who hold leadership roles through a series of graduate-level, practice-based courses that enable them to connect across schools and strengthen the leadership skills they need for the roles they share.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are examples of educators serving as policy leaders across the state.

**Revere** runs an *Education Leadership Board*, made up of 8 teachers and administrators from across the district, who represent 7 school-based Leadership Councils. The Board uses a shared decision-making model to collaborate on district-wide decisions.

**Teach Plus** provides the *Commonwealth Teaching Policy Fellowship* to support educators in deepening their knowledge around education policy and promote teacher voice and advocacy in policy discussions.

In **Lawrence**, every school has a *Teacher Leadership Team* that contributes to decision-making and annual school planning. All educators can also apply to the district *Teacher Leader Cabinet*, which advises the superintendent on district priorities and initiatives. Educators can also receive stipends for additional school-based leadership opportunities.

In **Malden**, teacher leaders are a key part of the *District Leadership Team*, which also includes the superintendent, assistant superintendent, principals, assistant principals, program directors and coaches. The team meets regularly to inform district priorities.
Program Spotlight: Commonwealth Teaching Policy Fellowship

**Program Overview**

Members of the Teacher and Principal Advisory Cabinets (TAC and PAC) share their insights, suggestions, and feedback with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to help refine current policies and inform the development of new policies and resources at the state level.

**Pathway Opportunity**

This opportunity aids teacher leaders in being policy advisors or policy activists by providing them the space to share their learnings from the classroom, learn about and engage in the state-level policymaking process, and connect directly with policymakers.
Some gaps in programming and roles are evident from our scan of the current roles and opportunities in Massachusetts.

There are few “formal” roles focused on the Peer Development pathway, although many teachers take on that role informally to support and mentor their fellow teachers.

Most in-person opportunities are based in the Greater Boston area; teachers in Wester, Central and Southern Massachusetts are limited to virtual programming or need to travel longer distances to participate.

Available in-person and virtual programming tends to focus on leadership roles at the schoolwide, district and state level, creating a gap for teachers who want to stay closest to the classroom.
Recommendations for Further Exploration
Beyond this landscape scan, we have identified three critical questions for further exploration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Big Questions</th>
<th>Areas to Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What impact are teacher leaders of color having in Massachusetts?</td>
<td>▪ What percentage are teacher leaders of color?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Where are they working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What roles are they playing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What is the breakdown district by district?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How do the teacher leader demographics compare to student demographics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does it cost to become a teacher leader?</td>
<td>▪ What do the individual programs cost?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What supplemental funds exist?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How much do need to teachers pay out of pocket?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What is the return on investment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How has the cost increased or declined over time, and how has that impacted participation and the expansion of teacher leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the state’s highest-need districts leverage and support their teacher leaders?</td>
<td>▪ What roles do their teacher leaders play?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ How many of their school/district leaders are former teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What programs, fellowships and/or trainings have their teacher leaders completed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What professional development do they offer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What has the impact been on student achievement?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix
Research Sources Cited


RAND Education (2012). *Teachers Matter Understanding Teachers’ Impact on Student Achievement*

New Teacher Center (2017). *School Leadership Counts: Instructional Leadership for Student Success*

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2019). *State Report Card Staffing Data by Race, Ethnicity and Gender.*
The Barr Foundation supports new learning models that respond to the needs of young people across New England, with a particular focus on secondary students.

Education Program Strategies

- **Catalyze new models.** Fuel fresh designs that fit local contexts and transform the high school experience, to put success within reach of all students.

- **Build public will.** Engage parents and students, educators and civic leaders, and all residents as informed advocates for high-quality schools.

- **Invest in educators.** Develop the pipeline of diverse, skilled, effective teachers and school leaders who bring new educational models to life for their students.

Source: Barr Foundation (2019)
The state’s student population has increased significantly in size and diversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
<th>2010-2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>+5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>+1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the percentage of white students has decreased over the last 10 years, the percentage of students of color attending Massachusetts schools have continued to increase.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2019, 2010)
As the state’s student population has grown more diverse, the teacher population has remained largely white.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2019, 2009)
State assessment show a continued gap in performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 MCAS results</th>
<th>3rd-8th graders who meet or exceed <strong>ELA</strong> proficiency</th>
<th>3rd-8th graders who meet or exceed <strong>Math</strong> proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian students</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Asian students]</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Asian students]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black students</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Black students]</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Black students]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx students</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Latinx students]</td>
<td>![Bar chart for Latinx students]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White students</td>
<td>![Bar chart for White students]</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2018)