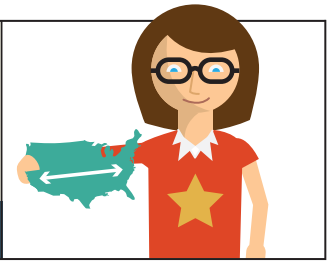# TEACHER-LED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

TO REACH EVERY STUDENT WITH EXCELLENT TEACHERS

FINDING TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Opportunity Culture **Principles** require protected, in-school time for on-the-job learning. Research shows that effective professional development is embedded in teachers' everyday practice, with opportunities to apply new learning followed by self-reflection and feedback. Opportunity Culture models enable teacher-leaders to take responsibility for this critical task. In **Multi-Classroom Leadership,** excellent teachers with leadership competencies lead teacher teams to meet the leaders' standards of excellence. Multi-classroom leaders have daily time to collaborate with their teachers, and observe, develop, and model skills for them.

Careful scheduling allows schools to find the in-school time needed for those tasks. Schools should create blocks of time in the schedule for team collaboration. They may also combine Multi-Classroom Leadership with other **models** that allow students to spend some time learning the basics online, and have paraprofessionals supervise students while they work individually, in small groups, or online. Multi-classroom leaders can meet with their teams or individual teachers during this time.

In addition to building professional learning time into the existing school day, an increasing number of schools now fund longer school days and years, and devote a portion of that time to teacher-led professional learning. A recent survey identified more than 1,500 schools with expanded learning time.

The checklist on the following page offers an overview of strategies that schools use to find time for teacher-led professional learning, as well as a description of some basic requirements to implement each strategy. Several strategies may need to be combined to find the adequate time that is essential for multi-classroom leaders to fulfill their leadership responsibilities.

Districts and schools that want to build time for teacher-led professional learning into the school day can use this chart as a guide to selecting strategies that make the most sense for them.

See also:

* **Using Excellent Teachers' Time Wisely:** http://opportunityculture.org/teachers-time/. Detailed descriptions of Opportunity Culture models, which extend the reach and accountability of excellent teachers in ways that include time for daily, on-the-job professional learning. These models provide protected in-school time and clarity about how teacher-leaders and their teams can better use daily professional learning time for planning, collaboration, and development.

* **Example Schedules for School Models:** http://opportunityculture.org/reach/schedules/. Example schedules show how teachers in Opportunity Culture schools can rotate their teachers' time in subject-specific teams with digital learning, or have elementary teachers specialize in their best subject or subject pair, such as math/science. Teachers gain professional learning and collaboration time from these models.

* **Charlotte, N.C.'s Project L.I.F.T.: New Teaching Roles Create Culture of Excellence in High-Need Schools:** http://opportunityculture.org/our-initiative/participating-sites/cms-project-lift/. Case study of how pilot Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools implemented new Opportunity Culture models that extend the reach of excellent teachers to more students, and how new Multi-Classroom Leadership and Time-Technology Swap models provide more planning, collaboration, and co-teaching time for teachers and teacher-leaders.

BUILDING AN OPPORTUNITY CULTURE FOR AMERICA'S TEACHERS

PUBLIC IMPACT

Time Use Strategies Checklist

Time Use Strategies	Reduces student instructional time (e.g., late arrival)?	Requires creative reworking of existing school schedule?	Requires hiring new personnel (e.g., parapro-fessionals, lab monitors)?	Requires new financial investment?
Create schedule blocks—*All nonacademic or subject-specific classes are scheduled at the same time, so teacher teams can collaborate*	No	Yes	No	No
Reduce school day—*Regular early dismissal or late start*	Yes	Yes	No	No
Repurpose existing meeting time—*Repurpose in-service and faculty meeting time to create more time for professional learning*	No	No	No	No
Bank time—*Extend class time a few minutes a day and use the "banked" time to create blocks of time for professional learning*	No	Yes	No	Maybe
Take advantage of events—*Use schoolwide activities, events, and testing time for professional learning*	Maybe	No	No	No
Expanded time—*Finance longer school days and/or add days to the school year*	No	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Give teacher-leaders flexibility—*Reorganize teacher-leaders' time so they have the flexibility to "push into" team teachers' classrooms for professional learning*	No	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Introduce co-teaching—*Allow teachers to co-teach or combine classrooms during the school day for collaborative professional learning*	No	Yes	No	No
Use current paraprofessionals—*Assign paraprofessionals to supervise students working individually, in small groups, or with digital content*	No	Yes	No	No
Position swap—*Swap a teacher position on a teaching team with a paraprofessional job, to give teachers additional time to collaborate*	No	Yes	Yes	No
Add paraprofessionals—*Hire additional paraprofessionals to supervise students working individually, in small groups, or with digital content*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes