

# PUBLIC IMPACT



## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Indianapolis Public Schools Begin Opportunity Culture Initiative  
District to Extend the Reach of Excellent Teachers and Their Teams To More Students,  
Providing High-Paid, Classroom-Based Career Paths**

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.— Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) is launching a new initiative to extend the reach of its excellent teachers and teams they lead to more students, for more pay, within budget. With the support of Public Impact, IPS will lay the groundwork by June for up to six schools to opt into piloting “[Opportunity Culture](#)” staffing models, which reach many more students with great teaching and create career paths for teachers to join teams, advance their careers and lead peers without having to leave the classroom.

In an Opportunity Culture, teachers lead the way to change their schools. Opportunity Culture models use job redesign and age-appropriate technology to extend teachers’ reach. A team of teachers and administrators at each school selects and adapts the models to fit their school best. IPS pilot schools will create these teams over the summer, and they will work toward implementing the new models in the 2016–17 school year.

“We’re delighted to give our schools the opportunity to give all teachers the support, on-the-job learning, leadership opportunities, and higher pay they deserve,” said Superintendent Lewis Ferebee. “I want all students to benefit from excellent teaching.”

Support is a [hallmark](#) of Opportunity Culture schools. Teachers typically work in collaborative teams, with set-aside time during school hours for planning and developing their skills, along with frequent feedback from the teaching team leaders.

Pilot schools will receive help changing their schedules to make this set-aside time possible and developing an effective team process focused on excellent teaching. This team collaboration and teacher-led improvement provides a supportive environment for teachers to address student needs.

In Opportunity Culture schools, each school design team chooses how to reallocate its regular budget to pay teachers substantial supplements. This makes pay supplements permanently available to teachers, rather than temporarily, as in grant-funded pay plans. Supplementary compensation is layered on top of the regular salary schedule. Schools may also have initial, temporary transition costs such as facilitation of school and district design decisions and technology investments.

Public Impact created the core models and launched the national [Opportunity Culture](#) initiative in 2011. IPS joins school districts in Syracuse, N.Y., Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., Nashville, Tenn., Cabarrus County, N.C., and Big Spring, Texas, among others, in creating their own Opportunity Cultures. In 2015, the initiative is extending its Opportunity Culture work to principals, as well.

Most of these Opportunity Culture schools have chosen to use the [Multi-Classroom Leadership](#) model, which lets excellent teachers lead without leaving the classroom. The multi-classroom leader leads a team of teachers, co-teaching, co-planning, and collaborating with them, and taking formal accountability for all of the students the team reaches. Multi-classroom leaders in other Opportunity Culture sites are earning pay supplements up to nearly 50 percent of their state’s average teacher pay.

Many schools also use the [Time-Technology Swap](#) model, in which teachers use digital instruction for limited, age-appropriate periods (as little as an hour daily), freeing time while some students learn online to teach more students, plan and collaborate with a teaching team.

Teachers may also [specialize](#) in certain subjects or roles in which they are strongest, such as teaching math and science only in elementary school.

For more information, please visit [www.OpportunityCulture.org](http://www.OpportunityCulture.org). To arrange an interview with Public Impact’s co-director, Dr. Bryan C. Hassel, contact Anne Halstater at [Anne\\_Halstater@publicimpact.com](mailto:Anne_Halstater@publicimpact.com); 919.357.5519.

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### **About Public Impact**

Public Impact is a national organization whose mission is to dramatically improve learning outcomes for all children in the U.S., with a special focus on students who are not served well. We are a team of professionals from many backgrounds, including former teachers. We are researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who work with leading education reformers.

Learn more about an Opportunity Culture on [OpportunityCulture.org](http://OpportunityCulture.org). The website also provides [tools](#)—all free—for school design teams, and related [publications](#).