

MULTI-CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP + TEAM REACH

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MODEL

BY PUBLIC IMPACT

Multi-Classroom Leadership is the cornerstone of an Opportunity Culture. At the elementary level, teachers with a record of high-growth student learning and leadership competencies, known as multi-classroom leaders or MCLs, both teach part of the time and lead small, collaborative teams of two to eight teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher residents in the same grade or subject to meet each MCL’s standards of excellence. MCLs establish each team member’s roles and goals at least annually, determine how students spend time, and organize teaching roles to fit each teacher’s strengths, content knowledge, and professional development goals. Their duties include teaching and collaboratively co-planning, co-teaching, modeling excellent instruction, leading review of student data, coaching, and giving feedback, while also serving on the schoolwide leadership team. An MCL may also be remotely located, leading a team whose members are co-located or spread among several schools, using webcams and similar technology.

Schools **combine Multi-Classroom Leadership with Team Reach** when they want to reach more students with available teachers and/or increase teacher planning time, pay, and career advancement opportunities.

- * **Team reach teachers** directly teach more students than usual, but typically without raising instructional group sizes and with increased small-group instruction.
- * Students **rotate among teachers and paraprofessional “reach associates”** or teacher residents, who may tutor individuals and small groups and supervise skills practice, project work, and limited, age-appropriate digital instruction. Reach associates also may help with administrative tasks for the team.
- * Teachers use their face-to-face teaching time for **higher-order learning and personalized follow-up**, often using small-group instruction. Teachers may specialize by subject.
- * Teachers with prior, consistently high growth may take advanced roles as **master team reach teachers**, to assist a multi-classroom leader with a larger team and/or to reach significantly more students than other teachers.

See a more complete explanation of MCL and team reach teacher duties in the next section.

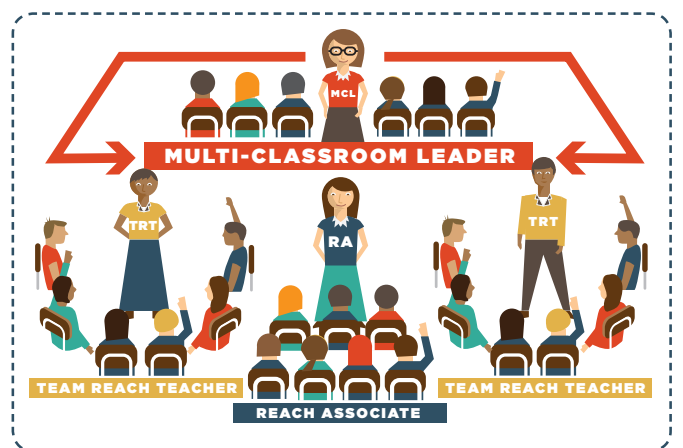
MCLs and team reach teachers earn substantial pay supplements—typically funded by reducing the number of non-classroom specialists (some of whom may become MCLs), and/or by adding a paraprofessional for instructional and administrative support in exchange for a teaching position on the team, and/or by reallocating other costs within the school. Districts may have a career path within Team Reach and Master Team Reach levels to reward continued performance and commitment to these team roles.

Estimated Reach Extension Effect: Multi-classroom leaders typically reach 100%–700% more students; a team of elementary team reach teachers reaches about 33 percent more students, on average, than a grade with the same number of teachers typically does. For more on this model, see <https://opportunityculture.org/multi-classroom-leadership/>.

MORE DETAIL

Each MCL leads a team of teachers to jointly build each student’s academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and organizational skills. MCL teams have a median of five teachers, but experienced, successful MCLs may lead larger teams of six to eight, while some lead smaller teams. When combined with Team Reach, team teachers also reach more students than typical directly, by rotating students through limited time with added paraprofessionals or teacher residents.

Students who would not otherwise have access to an excellent teacher’s standards and methods can now have them, either directly from MCLs or from teachers on their teams.



In 2018 research, teachers who were on average at the 50th percentile in student learning gains, who then joined teams led by MCLs (all of whom had prior high growth as teachers), produced learning gains equivalent to those of teachers from the 75th to 85th percentile in math, and, in six of the seven statistical models, from 66th to 72nd percentile in reading. Teams studied had a median of five teachers in addition to the MCL. Student growth began to increase schoolwide after MCLs were added in only part of a school. Higher pay supplements for MCLs, provided through reallocations of school budgets, were associated with better outcomes for team teachers.¹

When combined with Multi-Classroom Leadership, Team Reach enables:

- * more instruction leading to high growth for students;
- * more student learning time in small groups;
- * easier scheduling of teacher collaboration;
- * saving money for higher pay, when vacant positions are traded for extra paraprofessional support; and
- * a paid career path for more teachers.

The MCL model can also be used to create part-time team teacher/team reach teacher roles when a teacher requests such a role, which may help retain excellent, experienced teachers who would otherwise leave the profession at various stages of their career for family or other personal reasons.

This model requires schedule and pay changes, described below. Ideally each team's classrooms are located near one another. Facilities changes are unnecessary, unless needed to enable limited, age-appropriate digital instruction or assessment. Digital assessments and organizing tools to analyze the whole team's students can help.

See the Opportunity Culture [Instructional Leadership and Excellence](#) and the [Multi-Classroom Leadership](#) web pages for links to all variations of the MCL model, job descriptions, free tools, videos, and more to help MCLs and teachers succeed.

Role Changes for Excellent Teachers and Their Teams:

MULTI-CLASSROOM LEADERS

The role changes for MCLs are the crux of this model, and all other changes must support the ability of MCLs to help small teaching teams produce high-growth learning for all of the team's students, for which the MCL is formally accountable.

As noted in the summary above, MCLs teach part of the time and lead small, collaborative teams of two to eight teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher residents in the same grade or subject to meet each MCL's standards of excellence. Each team uses the MCL's methods and tools. The responsibilities of MCLs require them to at least:

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- * **Co-plan, co-teach, model excellent instruction, coach, and give feedback:** The MCL sets **high standards** for instruction, through lesson plan content and methods, interim assessments, and interim and annual targets for student progress in content, higher-order thinking, and social-emotional skills. The MCL then leads the team in providing great instruction through co-teaching, modeling, coaching, and providing feedback on each team member's instruction. The MCL also leads the team to set high expectations of achievement for all students; hold students accountable for high expectations of behavior and engagement; and create strong relationships and regular communications with students and their families.
- * **Teach part of the time, in own class or otherwise**—such as by leading small groups of students who need the most differentiation in other teachers' classes.
- * **Clarify team roles:** The MCL clarifies all **team members' roles**, including the MCL's, such as who: teaches which aspects of subjects; teaches whole classes and small groups; tutors; grades; monitors student progress; plans lessons; plans instructional changes; supervises projects, skills practice, and digital instruction; teaches more students directly with paraprofessional support; completes noninstructional tasks, etc.
- * **Lead the team to analyze student learning data and change instruction for high-growth learning by every student:** The MCL leads the team in analyzing data to determine **how students spend time**—what subjects/sub-subjects when; large group, small group, and individual time; face-to-face and digital instruction; knowledge and skills acquisition; higher-order thinking—analytical, creative, and conceptual; social-emotional skill development; and how students are grouped for each unit to achieve high growth by students at all starting levels.
- * **Collaborate with the team, using the team's ideas and innovations that the MCL agrees may improve learning:** The MCL establishes **methods and creates instructional tools** and materials that team teachers use in all classrooms, in collaboration with the team.

1. This study meets ESSA Evidence Level 2. For more information, see: Hansen, M., & Backes, B. (2018, January 25). New teaching model yields learning improvement for students in math [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2018/01/25/new-teaching-model-yields-learning-improvement-for-students-in-math/>



A Teacher's Impact =
Student Outcomes x
Number of Students Reached

- * **Take accountability for the learning and development of all students taught by the team members:** The MCL is **formally accountable** for the outcomes of all of the team’s students.
- * **Lead teacher development:** The MCL provides **frequent, on-the-job feedback and development** for team teachers, and organizes and schedules this time for individual and team development.
- * **Help choose and evaluate team members,** dismissing low performers if necessary (in cooperation with the principal): The MCL helps the principal **evaluate team teachers for potential role changes and increased responsibility.**
- * **Participate on a schoolwide instructional team of leaders with other MCLs, the principal, and others:** Schoolwide teams of leaders are crucial to consistent excellent instruction and a strong school culture, and to the development of MCLs.

TEAM REACH TEACHERS

In addition to the MCL role, the team reach teacher roles are essential to this model.

Team reach teachers (TRTs) serve on an MCL’s team, directly teaching more students than usual, but typically without raising instructional group sizes. With MCL guidance, the TRT plans and delivers instruction for multiple classes in a school where students rotate between face-to-face learning with the teacher and learning supervised by a paraprofessional reach associate (RA) or by a teacher resident. RAs supervise projects and skills practice, offline or digital, and may tutor individuals or small-groups, as determined by the MCL and teachers. While one class of students is with a reach associate, the TRT teaches another class of students, focusing on delivering personalized instruction and higher-order thinking skills. In elementary schools, the TRT may specialize by subject.

Master team reach teachers (MTRTs) also help the MCL lead a larger team (for example, by coaching part of the team) and/or reach *significantly* more students than other teachers. Additionally, the MTRT must have previously produced consistently high-growth student learning.

Some schools may have a more specific title for team reach roles, such as elementary subject specialist, blended-learning teacher, or expanded-impact teacher. Note that some districts use these titles only for master team reach teachers, and these titles may be reserved for TRTs who have produced high-growth student learning in prior years.

The team reach teacher and master reach teacher duties include:

- * **Setting high expectations of achievement** that are ambitious and measurable for students;
- * Together with the team and MCL, **planning and delivering in-person instruction** that develops students’ higher-order thinking skills and that is personalized (reflecting learning levels and interests of individual students);

OPPORTUNITY CULTURE PRINCIPLES

Teams of teachers and school leaders must tailor roles, budgets, and school operations to:

1. **Reach more students with excellent teachers and their teams**
2. **Pay teachers more for extending their reach**
3. **Fund pay within regular budgets**
4. **Provide protected in-school time and clarity about how to use it for planning, collaboration, and development.**
5. **Match authority and accountability to each person’s responsibilities**

- * **Designing personalized digital or offline assignments** for students when they are under reach associate supervision;
- * **Determining how students spend all instructional time;**
- * **Designing assessments** that accurately assess student growth;
- * **Providing reach associates** with student groupings, instructional assignments, and assessment rubrics;
- * **Collaborating with others working with the same students or subjects,** including other members of the MCL’s team as well as reach associates, to review student progress and change instruction to ensure high-progress, enriched learning for every student; and
- * **MTRT only: helping an MCL lead a larger team,** such as by helping coach other teachers, or reaching far more students than other teachers on the team.

Roles for Other Teaching Team Members: An MCL’s reach-extending team may also include:

- * **Team teachers** who collaborate to provide outstanding teaching with the MCL’s guidance but do not extend their reach to more students.
- * **Reach associates,** teaching assistants who contribute to excellence by providing instructional and noninstructional support to a teaching team, as designated by the team’s multi-classroom leader.
- * **Teacher residents,** who are learning to teach under the MCL’s leadership while earning a degree or certification.

Impact on Students: Students who would not otherwise have an excellent teacher benefit from the standards, materials, and methods of the MCL, who has a record of prior high-growth student learning. A very large number of students at all levels of advancement benefit from this model when schools select MCLs well, keep teams small (median of five, but two to eight teachers is common), and use the model to ensure instructional excellence by all on the team. Master team reach teachers also can help MCLs lead a larger team, reaching even more students with the excellent instructional methods of the MCL and MRT, or reach far more students directly with excellent instruction.

A team of elementary team reach teachers working on an MCL team can reach about 33 percent more students, on average, than a grade with the same number of teachers typically does, a strategy that may be especially important when the number of students is growing quickly. Or a team can reach the same number of students as usual with fewer teachers, a strategy that may be especially important when there are teacher shortages. An elementary reach team can serve the same number of students with one fewer teacher than usual—focusing teachers’ time on critical aspects of instruction—because of the paraprofessional support added to the team.

Impact on Schools: Based on research (see footnote 1), schools using this model schoolwide with fidelity to the Opportunity Culture Principles can expect schoolwide student growth to increase substantially, on average. Teachers will earn more, on average, and no one will earn less than usual.

Scheduling Changes: Schedules must change to allow time for MCLs to plan individually and with the team and to provide individual coaching time during school hours. Schedules must provide the additional school-day free time necessary for team reach teachers to do the extra planning, team collaboration, and student work review that come with reaching more students. Master team reach teachers also need the additional free time to help lead the team as established by the MCL.

Schools may find it easier to schedule team teachers if the teachers also specialize by subject or teaching role.

The schedule must also accommodate the non-standard personal teaching load and role of most MCLs. MCLs’ schedules vary based on the amount of time they spend teaching and on the needs of their teams each year.

At the school level, collaborative team time for grades or subjects may be staggered across the school day when paraprofessionals and other teachers can supervise and instruct students. Ideally, teams meet multiple times each week, or for one long block, for student data analysis, instructional improvement, and professional development.

See a schedule example at <https://opportunityculture.org/multi-classroom-leadership/>

Pay Changes: Each MCL earns more, depending upon how many classrooms they can lead successfully. Average MCL supplements have been 20 percent of average base pay, and as high as 50 percent. Reach team teachers earn more, based on school budgets and, approximately, on their increased reach and leadership; for example, team reach teachers may get a pay supplement of 2 to 5 percent of average pay, and master team reach teachers from 8 to 15 percent.

Cost Impact: This model is budget neutral in all Opportunity Culture schools. The reallocation of specialist roles and other budget changes at the school level and/or adding paraprofessionals for instructional and administrative support in exchange for vacant teaching positions on each team are the primary ways to fund MCLs and team reach teachers. Supplements are funded only through reallocations of regular school budgets, not temporary grants. Schools may fund the temporary costs of transition to an Opportunity Culture with part of the savings from reallocations, then raise pay more later.

Changes to Class/Group Size: None required in classrooms. Typically, schools with MCLs use substantial amounts of small-group learning time. More rarely, some schools that start with small class sizes increase their class sizes slightly while also adding more small-group and individual instruction, made possible by wise use of paraprofessionals and teacher residents.

Facilities and Technology Changes: Teachers on a team ideally have classrooms near one another in the building. If digital learning or assessments are used, classrooms must have an Internet connection, hardware, and software, and schools must have adequate electrical access for charging computers. Even when digital learning is not used, digital assessments and organizing tools to analyze the whole team’s students can help.

Estimated Reach Effect Calculation Assumptions: Figure 1 on the following page shows the increases in students reached when MCLs are responsible for increasing numbers of classrooms. Exact reach effects may depend on how many students each MCL’s team continues to teach and how often.

Because moving to an Opportunity Culture fundamentally changes the structure of a traditional school and district systems, nearly all schools and districts have found they need assistance in planning their transition to these models. **Contact Public Impact** for more information.

FIGURE 1. REACHING MORE STUDENTS WITH AN EXCELLENT TEACHER, THE MULTI-CLASSROOM LEADER

| # of Classes Led by Excellent Teacher | # of Students with Excellent Teacher Responsible for Learning | Reach Effect: % Increase in Students with Excellent Teacher Responsible for Learning |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | 24 | 0% |
| 2 | 48 | 100% |
| 3 | 72 | 200% |
| 4 | 96 | 300% |
| 5 | 120 | 400% |
| 6 | 144 | 500% |
| 7 | 168 | 600% |
| 8 | 192 | 700% |

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