# Unit 3: Life of an Educator

## Lesson 3.44: Teachers as Leaders Within a School Environment

| Lesson at Glance | | |
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| Warm-Up (5 mins)   * Bellringer | Instruction (20 mins)   * Introduction to Teacher Leader Roles (2 mins) * Stations: Teacher Leader Roles (18 mins) | Application (20 mins)   * Discussion Groups: Teacher Leader Roles (12 mins) * Debrief (3 mins) * Exit Ticket (5 mins) |

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| **TEKS** | 2 | The student identifies strategies that promote health and wellness to address the unique challenges of educators in balancing work and personal responsibilities. The student is expected to:   1. discuss the impacts of an education career on personal lifestyle such as impacts on time, earning potential, community presence and involvement, health and wellness, and family; |
| **Objectives** | * Identify opportunities for a teacher to take on additional professional roles as a member of the school community | |
| **Rationale/ Summary** | There are many leadership roles that teachers can take on as a member of the school community. In this lesson, students will be introduced to several leadership roles available for teachers within the school community and discuss the qualities and skills that make effective teacher leaders. | |
| **Formative Assessment and Exemplar Response** | Match the teacher profile with the leadership opportunity that best fits their experience.   1. Ms. Timberlake is a veteran teacher who has always been quick to support other teachers in the English department with advice or resources.  2. Ms. Cochran enjoys coding in her spare time and frequently finds herself in conversations with students interested in learning to code.   3. Mr. Jackson has been teaching for ten years and remembers how tough it was to be a first-year teacher. He tries to take new teachers under his wing and provide advice as needed.  4. Ms. Harris recently earned a graduate degree in curriculum and instruction and loves working with her team of teachers to analyze data and determine what practices can help students to be more successful in their math classes.  5. Mr. Alexander has been a member of the community his whole life, and as a student attended the school where he currently works. He is looking for a new leadership role where he can help to support the overall success of the school.   1. Professional Learning Community (PLC) Leader 2. Department Chair/Grade Level Chair 3. Mentor Teacher 4. School Improvement Committee member 5. Extracurricular Sponsor   *See Exit Ticket Answer Key for exemplar responses.* | |

| **Est Time** | **Instructional Activities (including formative assessments)** | **Materials** |
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|  | *The exploration of teacher leader roles will occur through a station rotation model. Six stations each with a different teacher leader role card will need to be set up. Depending on the number of students in your class, this activity can be done in groups of three. For larger classes, consider creating two sets of the cards and dividing the class into two groups, each with their own set of cards. The cards could be rotated between each group rather than having the students to rotate to stations.* |  |
| 5 mins | **Bellringer**  There are many different roles that teachers can have within the school environment. Here are some common roles that you might have observed:   * Extracurricular sponsor * Grade level/department level chair * Mentor teacher * Tutor   Record specific times you have seen teachers engaging in these roles in the school environment. Are there other roles that you have observed that are not included in this list?  T: Who can share a role they have seen a teacher take on outside of the classroom?  S: (Share out ideas. This may include coach, tutor, club sponsor, etc.)  T: (Write the roles on the board. Keep soliciting ideas from students until all roles have been shared.) | Student Guide |
| 20 mins | **Introduction to Teacher Leader Roles & Station Activity**  T: As you identified in the bellringer, there are many leadership roles that teachers fill outside of the classroom that impact the school community. Today, we are going to explore some opportunities for teachers to serve as leaders outside of their classrooms to extend and expand the impact they can have within the school environment. Please locate the section of your student guide labeled “Introduction to Teacher Leader Roles.”  S: (Locate section on student guide.)  T: You see that there are six different roles listed in a chart on your student guide. While there are many ways a teacher can be a leader in the school environment, these are some of the more common teacher leader roles that might be available. You will notice six stations around the room (point to the stations). Each station has a teacher leader role card. You will work with a group of three to rotate through each station, collecting the required information to complete the chart on your student guide for each role. You will have two minutes at each station. What questions do you have about this activity?  S: (Asks clarifying questions.)  T: (Group students into teams of three and assign each group to a starting station.)  T: Please move to your assigned station with your group. I will keep time and tell you when to rotate to the next station.  S: (Move to assigned first station.)  T: You may begin. You will have 2 minutes at this station. (Set 2-minute timer.)  S: (Begin working at assigned station.)  T: Time is up. You may now rotate to your next station. Once at your station, you may begin working. (Keep time for each station (2 minutes) and rotate students for a total of 8 stations.)  S:(Complete chart for all stations.)  T: You should have completed your last station. Please return to your seat now.  S: (Return to seats.) | Student Guide |
| 12 mins | **Discussion Groups: Teacher Leader Roles**  T: Now that you have had some time to collect information about each teacher role, you will get to discuss some of the learnings in a group. We will now count off to establish discussion groups. (Direct students to count off to form groups of 4.)  S: (Count off to form groups of 4)  T: You will have 10 minutes in your groups to discuss the questions in the Discussion Groups: Teacher Leader Roles section of your student guide. Record notes about your group conversation under each question in your student guide. What questions can I answer?  S:(Ask clarifying questions.)  T: You may now move to your groups and begin your discussion. (Set timer for 10 minutes.)  S: (Move to groups and begin discussion.) | Student Guide |
| 3 mins | **Debrief**  T: As you can see, there are many opportunities for teachers to serve as leaders beyond their classrooms. What are some of the teacher leader roles that you explored today?  S: Mentor teachers, Professional Learning Community Leader, Tutors, Extracurricular activity sponsors, School Improvement Committee member, and grade level or department chairs.  T: Who is impacted when teachers take one leadership roles outside of the classroom?  S: Students, other teachers, and the community members can feel the positive impact when teachers take on these roles.  T: What are some of the leadership skills that are needed by teachers in the roles that were discussed?  S: Good communication, collaboration, interpersonal, and organizational skills are needed for most roles. Those working with teachers also required good data analysis skills and experience with teaching practices. | Student Guide |
| 5 mins | S: (Complete the Exit Ticket in Student Guide.) | Student Guide |

Teacher Leader Role Cards

**Grade Level/Department Chair**

Grade level or Department Chairs serve as lead teachers for either a specific grade level or a department. In this role, these lead teachers help to facilitate the collaboration and cooperation of other teachers in the same grade level or department. This includes coordinating meetings, planning meeting agendas and action items as well as facilitating data analysis activities to determine instructional effectiveness, areas of student strength and learning as well as specific needs for students.

Teachers in this role are typically experienced teachers with strong organizational, communication and data analysis skills. They work to create environments where teachers can productively and effectively collaborate to meet the needs of all students and to ensure that instruction is developmentally appropriate and rigorous.

**Mentor Teachers**

Whether a teacher is new to a school or new to the profession, a new staff member needs additional support with learning how the school operates and what is expected of staff members. A mentor teacher is someone who can serve as a go-to person to ask about teaching and school procedures and policies. They help to make new teachers feel welcomed and a part of the school community. When new teachers feel welcomed and connected to the school environment, the new teachers are less likely to leave the school in the future. Additionally, mentor teachers can help the new teachers find and access the necessary resources to support students in their academic success.

Teachers in this role generally enjoy helping others. They are excellent communicators, are organized, and great interpersonal skills.

**Professional Learning Community (PLC) Leader**

Many schools utilize a structure called a professional learning community where teachers of similar courses or grade levels meet regularly to analyze student work and data to make decisions about the best instructional practices to utilize to ensure that all students demonstrating mastery of the content. PLC leaders are responsible for communicating and facilitating team meetings as well as ensuring a productive environment where all team members are valued and contribute to the work.

Teachers in this role are generally veteran teachers, with extensive experience in curriculum and instruction. Additionally, they are great communicators and have strong data analysis and interpersonal skills.

**Tutors**

Sometimes students need additional support beyond the classroom to master academic content. Teachers can support student success by serving as tutors outside of the classroom. Tutors can work with students individually or in small groups to help them understand key concepts or ideas. They might also help students by teaching them skills to improve their academic process or give feedback on progress toward academic goals.

Teachers in this role generally enjoy working with students one-on-one to help them succeed. This requires the tutors to have good communication skills, strong interpersonal skills, as well as extensive knowledge in the best instructional practices to help students master the content.

**School Improvement Committee Member**

Each year schools must create School Improvement plans that outline goals for improvement as well as strategies for reaching those goals. The school improvement committee is made up of school stakeholders including teachers, parents, and school leaders. Teachers on the team participate in the strategic planning for improvement as well serve as representatives for their colleagues to raise concerns or suggestions for improvement.

Teachers in this role generally enjoy strategic planning and data analysis. Because they serve as representatives, they must also be skilled in communication. They often are also great collaborators, recognizing where goals can be met by working together.

**Extracurricular Activity Sponsor**

Extracurricular activity sponsors engage with students around a common topic or activity outside of the classroom. This could include serving as a club sponsor or an athletic team coach. Studies show that student involvement in extracurricular activities has a direct benefit to their academic and personal success. Leading a club or coaching can be a way for a teacher to share their personal experience and talents with students and potentially help students to think about future career choices that interest them.

Teachers in this role generally enjoy spending time getting to know and helping students to develop outside of the classroom. Leadership in this area requires strong interpersonal, organization, collaboration, and communication skills.