

Boston Teacher Leadership Resource Center

A word about the “Collaborative Courses” of the Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate

As BPS schools strive to accelerate student learning, they increasingly depend upon teacher leadership roles in which teachers are called upon to lead their colleagues in analyzing data, collaborating to improve instruction, participating in shared leadership structures, and ensuring current research and practices are informing the school’s work. To perform these important roles effectively, teacher leaders must have a range of specialized skills, beyond those required for effective classroom teaching. The **Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate** was designed to identify and recognize teachers who have the leadership skills that schools need for improvement and reform. Teachers earn the Certificate by demonstrating their competency in each skill area as they complete role-relevant performance assessments. (See competencies and assessments on page 2.)

In the “Collaborative Courses” of the Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate (BTLC), teachers work together to strengthen the skills they need to complete the performance-based assessments well. The structure of these facilitated study groups is unlike traditional graduate courses.

- **They are competency-based.** The purpose of the courses is support teachers to build the knowledge and skills they need to demonstrate mastery of the competencies of the Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate by completing the performance assessments successfully.
- **They are dynamic and responsive.** Information collected upon registration about participants’ relevant strengths and learning goals is used by course facilitators to refine the syllabus and maximize participants’ opportunities to be challenged by new material and to learn from one another.
- **They are role-specific.** Courses are offered in role-alike cohorts. This enables facilitators to differentiate the course content to ensure participants have an experience that supports them to perform their specific shared role well. This structure also allows teachers from across the district to come together in a professional community that is committed to common work.
- **They are led by a facilitator, not an instructor.** While the teacher leaders and others who are course facilitators have experience with the content of the course and familiarity with the target role, they are not “experts” who will be “teaching” the material. Drawing from a collection of resources and instructional materials compiled to support the course and the strengths that participants bring, facilitators will guide discussions, lead activities and connect teachers to resources that will enable all to strengthen the specific skills they need to complete the assessments well.
- **They represent an evolving new model of professional learning.** The BTLC courses were designed by teacher leaders in the 2010-2011 school year to meet the real needs of teacher leaders. These courses and their unique instructional design will continue to be refined and improved throughout the coming year. Our goal is to make an observable difference in the impact of teacher leadership roles on teaching and learning, the culture of schools, and teachers’ satisfaction the profession of teaching. With your active participation and ongoing feedback, we can achieve these important goals.

Please consider how these course features will work with your learning style and review the competencies and assessments before enrolling in a BTLC course. Current course schedule and registration information is available on the Resource Center webpage: <http://www.bpe.org/teachers/teacherleaders> . Contact us with any questions.

Boston Teacher Leadership Certificate: Core Skills, Competencies & Assessments

Core Skill	Core Competencies	Performance-Based Assessments
Using Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and analyzing data Using data to inform decisions Communicating with data Creating and sustaining a data culture 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a priority problem using multiple data sources Implement or lead a team through a data-based inquiry cycle Communicate cycle results to three audiences Assess school or team data culture and create a plan to strengthen it
Supporting Instruction	<p>* Understanding educators as adult learners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Observing and analyzing instruction Providing growth-oriented feedback on instruction Evaluating and adapting instructional resources Planning and implementing effective professional learning experiences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Observe a) your own teaching and b) a colleague's teaching, then analyze both Conference with observed colleague Evaluate an instructional resource and adapt for use in your context Plan and implement a professional learning experience
Shared Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening unity of vision on a team Managing an effective team Understanding self and team as part of a system 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the unity of vision on a team and implement a plan to strengthen it Assess team functioning; implement strategies to improve team management Create a map illustrating the team's theory of action that includes its relationship to other relevant teams and systems and identifies opportunities for sharing team learning
Professional Expertise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Guiding reflection for professional growth Harnessing professional expertise within a school Tapping the professional knowledge base Applying expertise to systemic improvement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lead a reflective dialogue and reflect on your leadership of it Establish or improve a routine that supports team members to be aware of and share their relevant expertise Identify and evaluate professional literature relevant to a specific problem of practice Make research-based recommendations regarding a local policy or practice that needs improvement

These competencies were derived from a review of the literature (research, national and local standards) including:

- The "Teacher Leadership Skills Framework" from the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession
- The "Model Teacher Leaders Standards" (2010) from the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium
- The "Five-State Leadership Consortium" of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
- The "New Teacher Center Mentor Academy" at University of California, Santa Cruz
- The "BPS Dimensions of Effective Teaching" and "BPS Dimensions of Effective Leadership" from the Boston Public Schools
- The "MA Professional Standards for Administrators" used for licensure in Massachusetts
- The "National Board Certification for Educational Leaders" from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
- The "National Educational Technology Standards for Administrators (NETS-A)" from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)