
Growing Teacher Leaders for the Classroom

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Relationships: Articles

DESCRIPTION

“Growing Teacher Leaders for the Classroom,” by Mary S. Anderson, describes qualities of effective leadership that promote teachers’ professional learning as they become leaders in the classroom. The importance of providing an environment for the development of teachers as leaders is highlighted to keep highly effective teachers in the classroom working directly with students. Using the framework of M. Fullan’s book, *Leading in a Culture of Change* (2001), qualities of teacher leaders are explored. Teacher leaders demonstrate the following qualities:

- Moral Purpose - Teacher leaders are dedicated to their profession and the work they do in the classroom.
- Understand the Change Process - Teacher leaders understand that change takes time and they are willing to work through the change process.
- Knowledge Building - Teacher leaders take responsibility for continuing to grow in their knowledge of mathematics and teaching. They work with colleagues in professional learning communities to study content and pedagogy as they work to improve student learning.
- Build Relationships - Teacher leaders are worthy of trust and willingly work in interdependent learning communities.
- Making Coherence - Teacher leaders work through confusion and uncertainty to focus their work.

STAGE 2 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

“Growing Teacher Leaders for the Classroom,” by Mary S. Anderson, supports stage 2 development of leaders working to facilitate participation in collaborative site-based professional learning for every teacher. Part of the job of a mathematics specialist is developing the leadership skills of the teachers with whom they work. Specialists soon realize their best allies are teachers who are willing to take on leadership roles with their peers while remaining in the classroom. This article provides a framework, based on the work of M. Fullan in *Leading in a Culture of Change* (2001), for promoting teacher leaders in classrooms. Using the experiences of the author as described in the article, specialists might explore how one school used professional learning communities, lesson study, book studies, and other teacher driven initiatives to take ownership of their own professional growth. Specialists might then collaborate on a plan for developing leaders among the teachers they serve. As a group they might work to support each other in the implementation of their plans.

As specialists work together, the following strategies might provide a framework for their collaborative sessions:

- Share their own stories of moral purpose and their beliefs about teaching.
- Work through a study of the change process as a catalyst for reflective conversations.
- Identify areas for content and pedagogy training.
- Develop norms and protocols for working together in professional learning communities.
- Focus their work and make connections.