



Policy Making

Competency

Educator deepens their understanding of how their strengths in teacher leadership impact the policy-making process.

Key Method

The educator uses the Learn-Design-Do-Reflect cycle to conduct a needs assessment and to engage stakeholders in a policy-making meeting or activity. The educator also deepens their understanding of the policy-making process and how their own biases, experiences of privilege, and personal values impact this competency.

Method Components

Smart education policy should be shaped and guided by what accomplished teachers know about teaching and learning. Too often, individuals with little to no classroom experience are put in charge of making policy decisions. However, teacher leaders are willing to step up and step out of their classrooms to serve in school, district, state, or national policy leadership capacities to help to shape, and eventually, implement policies that can support student learning.

Policy Competencies for Teacher Leaders

- Policy Implementation
- Policy Advocacy
- Policy Making
- Policy Engagement and Relationships

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Learn-Design-Do-Reflect Cycle

The Learn-Design-Do-Reflect cycle is a tool used in the NEA Teacher Leadership Institute to support the development of teacher leadership. The following descriptors can help you understand your participation in each step of the process:

- Learn – Delve into the resources, explore the needs of your school, district, or state, and perform a self-assessment in order to gain a deeper understanding of the available research and best practices as well as the needs of your educational setting and your own professional learning needs.
- Design – Design an action plan that addresses at least one of the needs of your school, district, or state.
- Do – Implement your plan and at the same time collect information and evidence about the challenges and successes involved in the plan's implementation.
- Reflect – Take time to reflect on the outcomes and the process involved in the implementation of your action plan and consider the next steps.

Policy Making and Teacher Leadership

According to the NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies (2018), through developing your teacher leadership skills in the area of Policy Making includes the following: (see the resource section for the link to the complete guide):

Emerging Level

- Demonstrate awareness of the process of creating policy.
- Identify key stakeholders and influences.

Developing Level

- Effectively explain policy and its relationship to current work to others.
- Engage with stakeholders.

Performing Level

- Demonstrate effective policy content knowledge based on a deep understanding of the available research.
- Build and strengthen alliances with a broad and diverse set of stakeholders.

Transforming Level

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- Build and sustain relationships around policy shifts to leverage change.
- Drive policy change for school improvement or improved student rights.
- Take a role as a policymaker or other formal leadership role beyond the school setting or environment.

Types of Policy Making Plans

- Share processes for identified policy projects with colleagues.
- Communicate with diverse colleagues and stakeholders about policy projects by attending meetings and/or by signing petitions.
- Create research-based policy proposals and build capacity for their implementation; then share them through professional media posts and/or email.
- Build and strengthen diverse coalitions and alliances to create and implement fair and equitable policies and to share relevant messages through personal narratives.
- Create and build relationships with diverse policy stakeholders to support and continue the change process.
- Use written proposals, such as endorsements and proclamations, or technology tools, such as videos, podcasts, radio broadcasts, or sound bites, to support policy change.
- Pursue and accept a formal policy role beyond school (e.g., elected office or appointed office/position, etc.).

Supporting Rationale and Research

Hackman, J. R. & Oldham, G. R. (1980). Work redesign. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

This seminal book examines the characteristics of designing work around organizational goals and missions. This research comes from the field of organizational sciences and has direct application in how work is organized for anyone involved in policy advocacy.

Hattie, J. (2015). What works best in education: The politics of collaborative expertise (Open Ideas). Pearson. Retrieved from

https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/corporate/global/pearson-dot-com/files/hat_tie/150526_ExpertiseWEB_V1.pdf

Hattie makes a strong case for the importance of collaborative expertise based on his meta-analyses of effective teaching practices, and this work builds on his visible learning work.

Kraft, M. A. & Papay, J. P. (2016). Developing workplaces where teachers stay, improve, and succeed. The Albert Shanker Institute.

Retrieved from [http://distributedleadership.org/assets/asi-\(2016\).pdf](http://distributedleadership.org/assets/asi-(2016).pdf)

“Teachers working in schools with strong professional environments improved, over 10 years, 38% more than teachers in schools with weak professional environments.”

Leithwood, K., Seashore-Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2010). Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.

In this study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, researchers from the University of Toronto and the University of Minnesota concluded that collective leadership has a stronger influence on student achievement than individual leadership, and that higher-performing schools award greater influence to teacher teams, parents, and students. Further, the study found that principals and district leaders do not lose influence as others gain influence.

Resources

Templates

[Teacher Leadership Context Circle Map \(Google Doc\) for Artifact 1](#)

[2018–Current Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows Action Plan Template for Artifact 3](#)

[Action/Design Plan Template for non-Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows for Artifact 3](#)

NEA Resources

[Teacher Leadership competencies as defined by the Teacher Leadership Institute](#)

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[Teacher Leadership Competencies](#) (Full booklet download)

Scroll to find the PDF download

Resources

[Activities vs. Outcomes: The Difference Makes All the Difference](#) [Learning Forward](#), October 2015, Vol. 36 No. 5

[Embarking on Action Research Educational Leadership](#),

[April 2009](#) [Engaging Stakeholders](#)

[Department of Education Comprehensive Needs Assessment](#)

[Document](#) [Design Thinking for Educators](#)

[Power Mapping](#)

[7 Steps to Create a Policy](#)

[Study She Should Run](#)

[Teacher Leadership Competencies](#) (Full booklet download) - scroll on webpage to find the PDF download

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and be proficient in all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

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(350–500 words)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Do not include any information that will make you identifiable to the reviewers.

- What is your professional mission and vision for teacher leadership?
- Describe your professional learning goals for completing this micro-credential.
- Describe the professional context for earning this micro-credential, including:
 - Number of years in education, subject area, etc.
 - School/community, e.g., rural, urban, suburban, school level, student/community demographics, socio-economic data, etc.
 - Share any additional information that may help someone understand your context
 - Describe your current roles and general experience in teacher leadership at the school, district, and/or state level
 - Who are the stakeholders in your community?

Passing: Professional mission and vision clearly state what the educator hopes to achieve in their career and what success will look like when achieved. The professional context is reasonable and accurate and includes specific professional learning goals as an outcome of completing this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following five artifacts as evidence of your learning.

**Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

Artifact 1: Teacher Leadership Circle Map

(see template in the resource section)

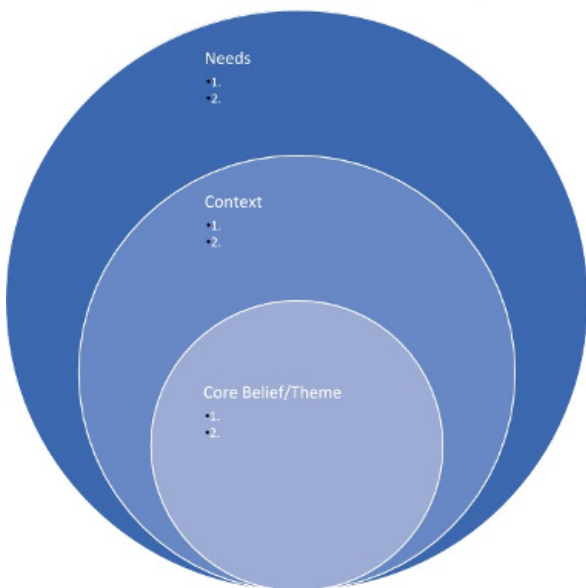
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Fill in the Circle Map using the template in the resource section or draw your own on chart paper.

Teacher Leadership Context Circle Map



Directions for completing the Circle Map

Center Circle: Core Belief/Theme

Use page 5 of the NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies Booklet (see resource section) to identify the Core Belief/Theme that most closely resonates with you.

Middle Circle: Context

Synthesize the information you gathered in Part 1. You may also include any other relevant contextual information to guide your thinking and recording for the middle circle, such as:

- District (suburban/rural/urban)
- Colleagues
- Site/District Administration
- Teacher Leadership Culture
- Demographics (school, community)
- The stakeholders in your school/district.

Outer Circle: Needs

After identifying your teacher leadership context, identify and record the needs of your school and/or district, in relationship to policy making, in the outer circle.

Consider the following guiding questions to help you identify your contextual needs:

- Is there a stakeholder group that is not represented in the decision making?
- How are diverse perspectives included?
- What inequities currently exist in your school/district?
- What resources are needed to address these inequities?
- What are the needs of the community?
- How does the school address the needs of the community?
- What are the needs of your school/district?
- What are the needs of your colleagues?
- How do the needs of your colleagues affect the classroom, school, and district?
- What are the needs of your local association?
- How do the needs of your association affect you and your colleagues?

Artifact 2: Review

Connect your Teacher Leader Circle Map to the policy making by answering the following questions (50–150 words or 3–5 bullet points each):

1. What might your role as a teacher leader be to positively impact the identified policy making needs of your stakeholders (students, school, district, association), based on your context and grounded in your core belief/theme?
2. What might your role as a teacher leader be to inspire and support other potential teacher leaders, in terms of effective policy making with cross-cultural or diverse groups, based on your context and grounded in your core belief/theme?

Artifact 3: Design

Use the Teacher Leadership Policy Making Competency to design an activity or action that you can do to address an identified need from

your Leadership Circle Map. Describe how your plan supports and promotes equity.

Complete and upload one of the following design templates:

- Option 1: 2018–Current Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows Action Plan Template

(see template in the resource section or use the one you created in your state cohort)

- Option 2: Action/Design Plan Template for non-Teacher Leadership Institute Fellows

(see template in the resource section)

Artifact 4: Do (part 1)

Upload 1 document with 3 different pieces of evidence that show the implementation of your action plan, annotated with short descriptions (20–50 words each). These artifacts may include:

- Websites
- Newsletter
- Emails to and from participants
- Recorded webinars
- Presentations
- Online forums (screenshots of conversations)
- Completed Websites
- Products developed during the process
- Artifacts from using tools like Remind or Huddle
- Voice-recorded messages for phone lists
- Group chats/text messages.

Descriptions should include:

- Time/Date
- Number of participants
- Purpose of artifact and how it was used
- Explain how equity is supported and promoted

Artifact 5: Feedback from participants in the Do aspect above (Do, part 2)

Obtain feedback from at least two stakeholders in attendance. Use the following prompts to obtain necessary feedback to serve as evidence. Ask your chosen participants to respond to each prompt in 2–3 sentences or 2–3 bulleted points.

- How did the teacher leader engage you in policy making?
- What were the intended outcomes? To what degree were the outcomes achieved?
- What did you gain from participating in this experience?
- If the teacher leader were to implement this plan again, what could be done differently? Why?
- How did the teacher leader address diversity, equity, and cultural competence during this activity?

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Circle Map	Circle Map is complete, and directions were followed closely Core Belief/Theme is from the Teacher Leadership Book The context section is complete with enough context to be useful to aid understanding the full picture Needs are listed and realistic and within your sphere of influence Needs reflect diverse perspectives Needs are identified using a positive proactive, professional voice and are facts not opinions	Circle Map is missing some important information Core Belief/Theme is not from the Teacher Leadership Book The context is missing some important information The needs may be too broad and outside of your realm of influence Needs reflect at least one diverse perspective Needs are based on opinion and not fact Professional or proactive voice is not used	Circle Map is incomplete Core Belief/Theme is not identified Very little context given Needs are not identified or are not based on facts Needs do not include diverse perspectives Needs are stated in a negative tone that is not proactive
Artifact 2: Action Plan	Template is completely filled out Professional goals are measurable, actionable, and relevant to policy making	Professional goals may not be measurable, actionable, and/or relevant to policy making	Professional goals are missing Needs are missing or are based on opinion and/or personal biases

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	Needs and current reality are based on actual evidence NOT opinion Needs reflect diverse perspectives Results are realistic and focus on affecting the practice of others Description is clear, and activity directly relates to the professional goals, needs, desired results, and policy making	Needs may be based partially on opinion and/or evidence that is not substantial Needs reflect at least one diverse perspective Results may not be realistic and/or do not focus on affecting the practice of others Description is not clear and/or the activity does not directly relate to the professional goals, needs, desired results, and policy making	Needs do not include diverse perspectives Unrealistic results Description missing or not understandable
Artifact 3: Design	Activity Design Template is completely filled out Activity design aligns to your identified needs Activity design is actionable Activity supports and promotes equity	Activity Design Template is not completely filled out Activity design loosely aligns to your identified needs Activity design is not actionable Activity supports equity	Activity Design Template is not used Activity design does not align to your identified needs Activity design is not actionable Activity does not address equity
Artifact 4: Do (part 1)	All three required pieces of evidence are uploaded and	Three pieces of evidence are included, but one or more	Fewer than three pieces of evidence are included, or the

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	clearly demonstrate implementation of the action plan. Each artifact is annotated with the date, number of participants, and purpose. Annotations clearly explain how the artifact was used and explicitly describe how equity was supported and promoted through the activity.	annotations is missing a required element, such as the date, number of participants, or purpose. The connection between the artifact and the action plan is present but not clearly explained. Equity is mentioned but not clearly tied to the specific artifact.	artifact does not show evidence of implementation. Annotations are missing or incomplete, with no clear explanation of how the artifact was used. Equity is not addressed.
Artifact 5: Feedback	Feedback from at least two stakeholders is included and clearly attributed to participants in the Do activity. All four prompts are addressed for each participant, and responses reflect genuine, specific participant voice rather than paraphrase by the teacher leader. Feedback addresses how diversity, equity, and cultural competence were handled during the activity, and includes constructive reflection on what	Feedback from at least two stakeholders is included, but one or more prompts is missing or thinly addressed. Equity, diversity, or cultural competence is mentioned but not clearly connected to the activity. Reflection on future changes is present but vague or lacks rationale.	Feedback from fewer than two stakeholders is included, or the source of the feedback is unclear. Multiple prompts are missing or unanswered, diversity and equity are not addressed, and there is no reflection on what could be done differently.

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	could be done differently and why.		
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Part 3 Reflection

(400–500 words)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

- How will your knowledge of policy-making impact your leadership work with others?
- How will you continue to lead learning activities to enhance the practice of others at various levels of leadership?
- How did addressing diversity, equity, and cultural competence affect your ability to engage in policy making?
- What are your next steps to continue your growth as a teacher leader?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on the teacher leaders as well as on others in the professional context of earning this micro-credential. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support the claims made. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.