

## Tool: Sample *Opportunity Culture*® Initiative FAQs for Applicants

[This is an example only. **Delete this paragraph and edit the title above and questions and answers below to fit your district and schools for sharing with job applicants.**]

### How did the Opportunity Culture® concept begin?

In 2009, Public Impact®, a national education policy and management firm, published a paper calling for more teachers to have paid, advanced roles while continuing to teach, in order to reach all students with excellent teaching. In 2012–13, the first two districts in the nation designed their Opportunity Culture® models, adhering to the five Opportunity Culture® principles, which call for teams of teachers and school leaders to choose and tailor models 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.

### Where are there schools with Opportunity Culture® models?

The initiative continues to add sites every year; see [OpportunityCulture.org](https://OpportunityCulture.org) for details and certified schools. Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia are among the states with participating districts. The initiative celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2023–24!

### Why did this district choose to implement Opportunity Culture® models?

We believe that the teacher in the classroom has the most impact on a student's performance, and implementing our initiative gives us a way to recruit, develop, retain, and reward excellent teachers. Teachers consistently say that they long to make more of an impact, have leadership opportunities that do not take them out of the classroom, and be paid commensurate with their level of responsibility and impact on students. Opportunity Culture® roles address all of this. We also focus on supporting and developing our teachers, and OC™ teams make consistent, personalized, on-the-job, weekly or even daily support possible.

### How do you know these roles are good for students?

**Research** shows large student learning gains associated with Multi-Classroom Leader® (MCL™) teams. Third-party studies have found that, on average, teachers who joined these teams moved from producing 50th percentile student learning growth to 77th percentile student learning growth. These gains equate to an extra half-year of learning for students each year, on average—just by having a team leader with prior high growth guide the team. In one study, the nearly 2,000 English learners taught by these teams had even larger reading gains—meaning an *extra* 1.3 years of learning compared with other English learners.

### Which schools are participating, and what roles do they offer?

This list [*insert list of your district's Opportunity Culture® schools*] shows the schools that have implemented Opportunity Culture® roles or are in the design process for implementing next year, and the roles they are using.

### What is the selection process like?

We have a rigorous selection process that focuses on competencies, taking into account our mission and school fit. It includes a pre-screening that considers your submitted data that shows your record of success with student achievement, followed by interviews from leaders of a specific school.

### How are these positions created within a school?

A team of teachers and administrators in each school adopts the Opportunity Culture® roles that best fit their school's needs, to reach more students with teachers who have produced high-growth student learning; the team figures out scheduling and how to pay for the roles as well.

### How am I supported in these new roles?

Great support is a hallmark of Opportunity Culture® schools. Multi-Classroom Leader® roles get intensive training before the school year begins in how to lead their teams, and all staff get on-the-job training and development, and scheduled, dedicated collaborative time for planning, coaching, and support.

### Are these positions here to stay long-term?

Yes. The Opportunity Culture® principles require schools to sustainably fund the roles through school budget reallocations, not through temporary grants. We believe these roles will be the new norm in education, and they continue to spread in other states as well. We believe these roles are best for students, providing them with a great education through well-supported, great teachers or teachers on a team led by a highly successful teacher—and we believe these roles are best for teachers and the teaching profession.

### What does a day in the life of an MCL™ role look like?

Busy and rewarding! An MCL™ educator's day may include direct instruction with students, co-teaching, coaching, modeling instruction for teachers, planning with teachers, and data analysis, observation, and feedback. Team leaders are granted much schedule flexibility, but expected to plan their schedules carefully to focus on what will make the most impact on student achievement. For an example of one day as an MCL™ educator, watch [this video](#).

### An MCL™ role sounds similar to an instructional coach/facilitator. What's the difference?

Unlike most coaches, MCL™ roles are fully accountable for the results of all the students assigned to them and their team—and they continue to teach part of the time in some way as well. And unlike many coaches/facilitators, they lead small teams—typically two to five, although they may lead teams of six to eight. This gives them the protected, in-school time to provide the on-the-job guidance, co-planning, help with data analysis, and feedback that is a hallmark of Opportunity Culture® model support. Additionally, these teacher leader roles help their teammates advance in their own careers and help principals lead instructional excellence schoolwide. Finally, additional pay for this advanced role does not depend on grants.

### How am I evaluated as an MCL™ educator?

These teacher leaders are responsible for the results of all the students on their team. They are evaluated under the state teacher evaluation along with an MCL™ role-specific evaluation.

### What does it mean to be in the Team Reach Teacher™ role?

Team Reach Teacher™ educators, or TRT™ educators, on an MCL™ team directly teach more students than usual, but typically without raising instructional group sizes, and receive a pay supplement. Some may be Master Team Reach Teacher™ educators, or MTRT™ educators, who have a track record of high-growth student learning and assist a team leader with leading a larger team. They may coach one or more other teachers on the team and teach significantly more students. Reach Associate™ paraprofessionals help avoid raising instructional group sizes by having students rotate through a learning lab or by pushing in/pulling out students at the direction of the team leader to provide tutoring to small groups or individuals or small groups and support students while they work on projects, skills practice, and digital learning.

### How am I evaluated in a Team Reach Teacher™ role?

These educators are responsible for the results of the expanded number of students they teach and are otherwise evaluated under the state teacher evaluation.

### What does a day in the life of a team teacher look like?

A team teacher's day is similar to a typical classroom teacher's schedule, but with more collaborative planning and data analysis time—no more teaching in isolation, but a day full of support instead.

### How am I evaluated as a team teacher?

Team teachers are evaluated under the state teacher evaluation.

### How is the Reach Associate™ role (RA™ role) role different from a traditional teaching assistant/paraprofessional?

The Reach Associate™ role is an advanced paraprofessional role, supporting teams with a focus on small-group tutoring. These roles take on greater levels of responsibility to support teachers with instruction; they provide release time and support for educators and tutor and support students in a learning lab or by pushing in or pulling out students from the team's classrooms, as directed by the MCL™ educator. These paraprofessional roles free up time for teacher leaders to work with team teachers and for TRT™ educators to work with more students through small-group or individual tutoring, by focusing their time on small groups and supporting students while they work on projects, skills practice, and digital learning, as well as supporting the team on other non-instructional tasks. While working with students, they often reteach concepts to students who have not mastered a skill, or extend and enrich instruction for students who are ready to move forward. These roles also must have some classroom management skills to supervise students independently. They do not create lesson plans, but implement plans created by the MCL™ role or team reach teacher™. They may provide input for lesson plans based on their observations and data gathered on student performance. This role may be played by a teacher resident who is obtaining a degree or certification while working, supporting the team while getting on-the-job training from the MCL™ educator. (Watch: [“A ‘Crucial’ Opportunity Culture® Role: Reach Associates™ Provide Small-Group Tutoring”](#).)

*Important Disclaimer: Public Impact® and the Opportunity Culture® initiative endorse only the content in our own current materials provided to clients on our website, the Opportunity Culture® portal, or through current communications (emails, eblasts). This document includes content created and owned by Public Impact®. Public Impact® is not responsible for any inaccurate or illegal content, additions, or other modifications created by third parties, if any. We expressly disclaim any prior versions, once replaced, and we disclaim all third-party materials or content added by clients, their employees, or others that are not in compliance with federal, state, or local law. We cannot guarantee compliance with all state, local and changing federal laws, and we recommend that clients obtain legal review. Please see [OpportunityCulture.org/terms-of-use](https://OpportunityCulture.org/terms-of-use).*