

Creating Accessible Pathways through Lead Teacher Registered Apprenticeship

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Session Focus

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain the rationale for a change to the way we staff schools
- Describe how North Dakota is approaching strategic school staffing through two cases
- Explain (and have excitement for!) a lead teacher registered apprenticeship



Some Noticings about Teacher Leadership

- **Lack of Clear Pathways for Advancement**
- **Schools Are Not Designed for Teacher Leadership**
- **Limited Time and Compensation**
- **Administrative and Policy Constraints**
- **School/System Culture Barriers and Resistance to Change**





The Next Education Workforce™ seeks to

1. Provide all students with deeper and personalized learning by building teams of educators with distributed expertise, and
1. Empower educators by developing better ways to enter the profession, specialize and advance.

Our building blocks of educator teams



Educational leader

Leaders of teams, schools or systems



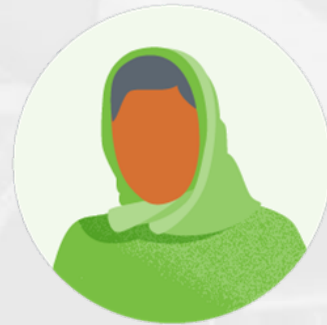
Professional educators

Pre-service, novice, experienced, and specialist teachers



Community educators

Prepared members of the community



Paraeducator

Complement the work of professional educators



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A typical set of 3rd grade classrooms



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students

100 students across four classrooms



1 paraeducator
Shared across all
four classrooms



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3rd Grade Team 1

Teacher A



ELA Planner
Math Planner
Family Communications

Teacher B



SS Planner
Science Planner
Tech Integration



Sharing 50 students

3rd Grade Team 2

Teacher C



ELA Planner
Math Planner
SS Planner
Tech Integration

Teacher D



Science Planner
Family Communications



Sharing 50 students



1 paraeducator
Shared across both teams



3rd Grade Educator Team

Teacher A

ELA Planner
Math Planner



Teacher B

Science Planner
Tech integration



Teacher C

Social Studies Planner
Family communications



Teacher D

Small-group support
MTSS Check-in/out



Paraeducator

Small-group support
MTSS Check-in/out

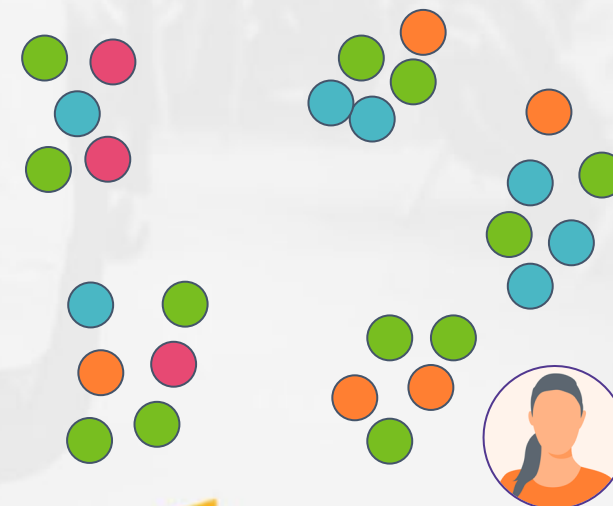
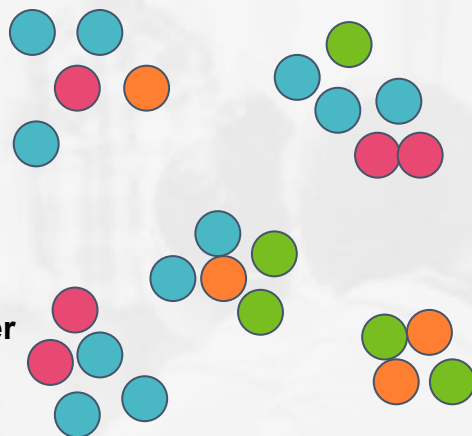


Sharing a roster of 100 students

7:30-8:00
Breakfast &
Advisory

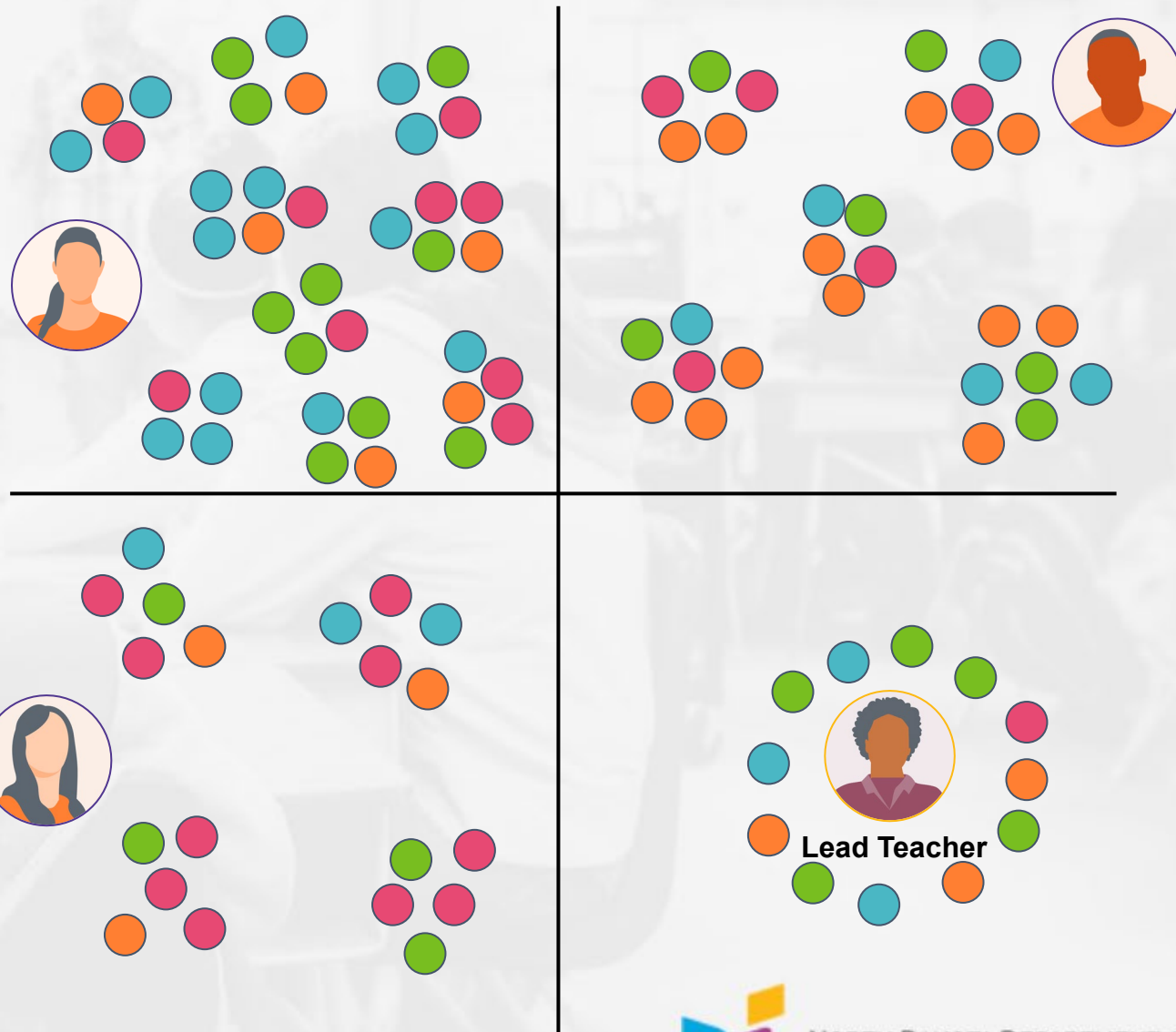


8:00-10:00
Reading
Block

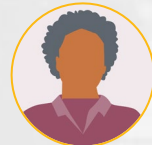
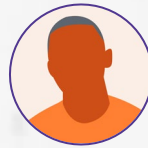


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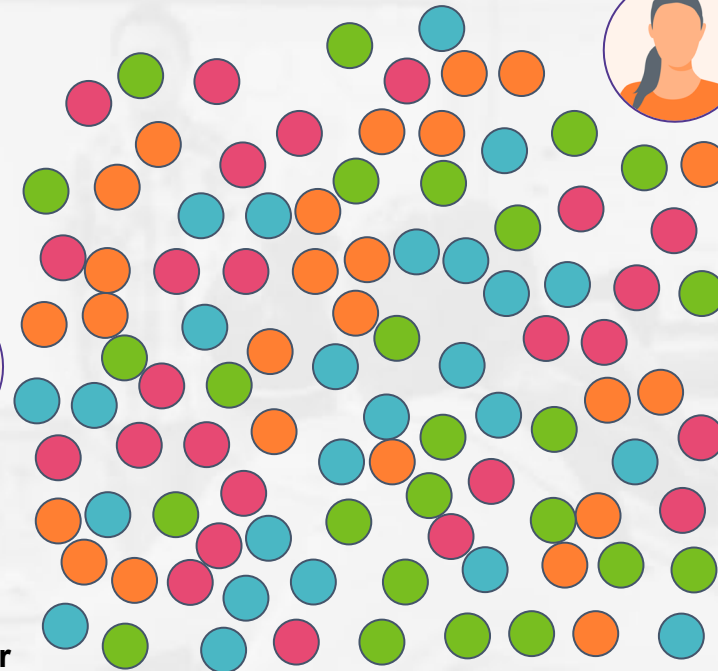
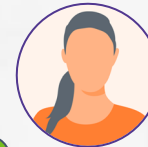
10:15-11:00
Math Block



11:00-11:20 Team Meeting



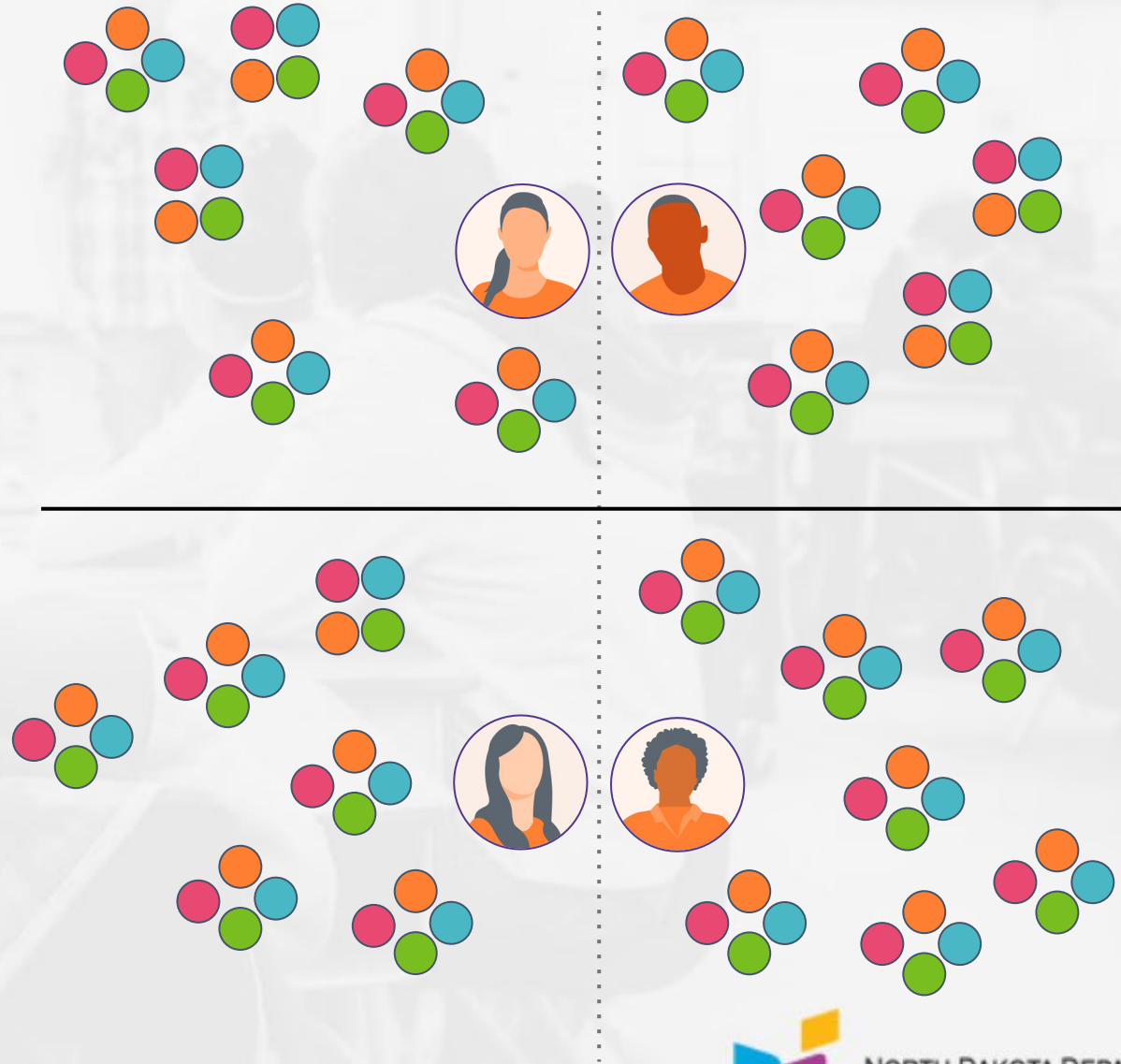
Lead Teacher



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12:00-1:00
Science

..... flexible walls retracted



3rd Grade Educator Team



Teacher B

ELA Planner
Social Studies Planner
Family Communications



Teacher C

Science Planner
Tech / AI Integration



Paid Teacher Resident

Small-Group Instruction
ELA + Math Tutoring



Special Educator



Lead Teacher

Math Planner
Team Management
Educator Coaching



Shared roster of 100 learners

Project-Based Mentors



Digital Learning Facilitator



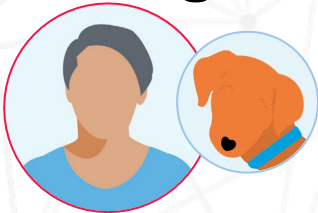
Cross-Team Data Analyst



Community Educator Coordinator

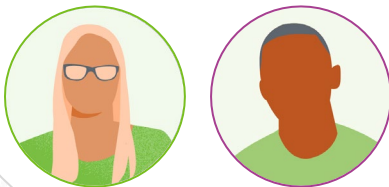


Therapy dog

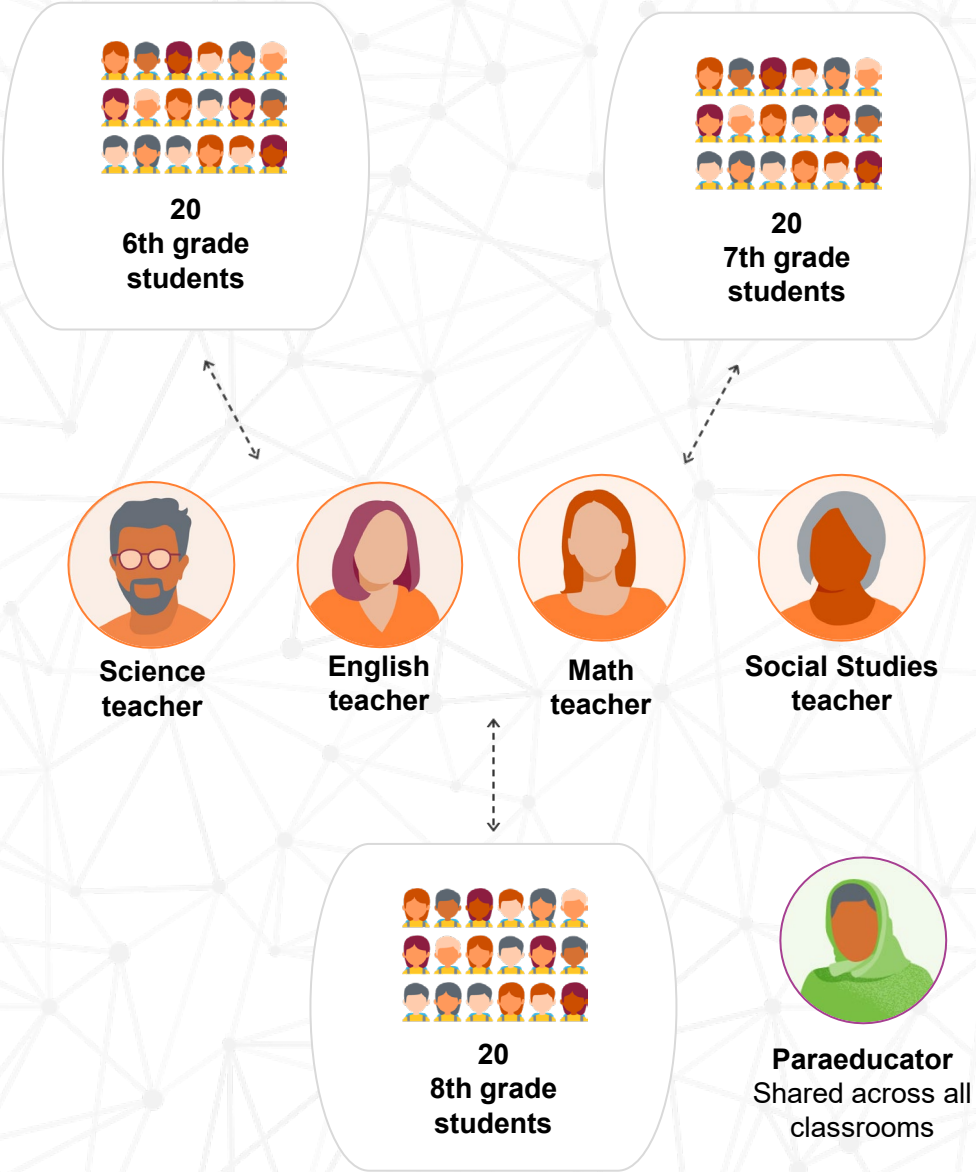
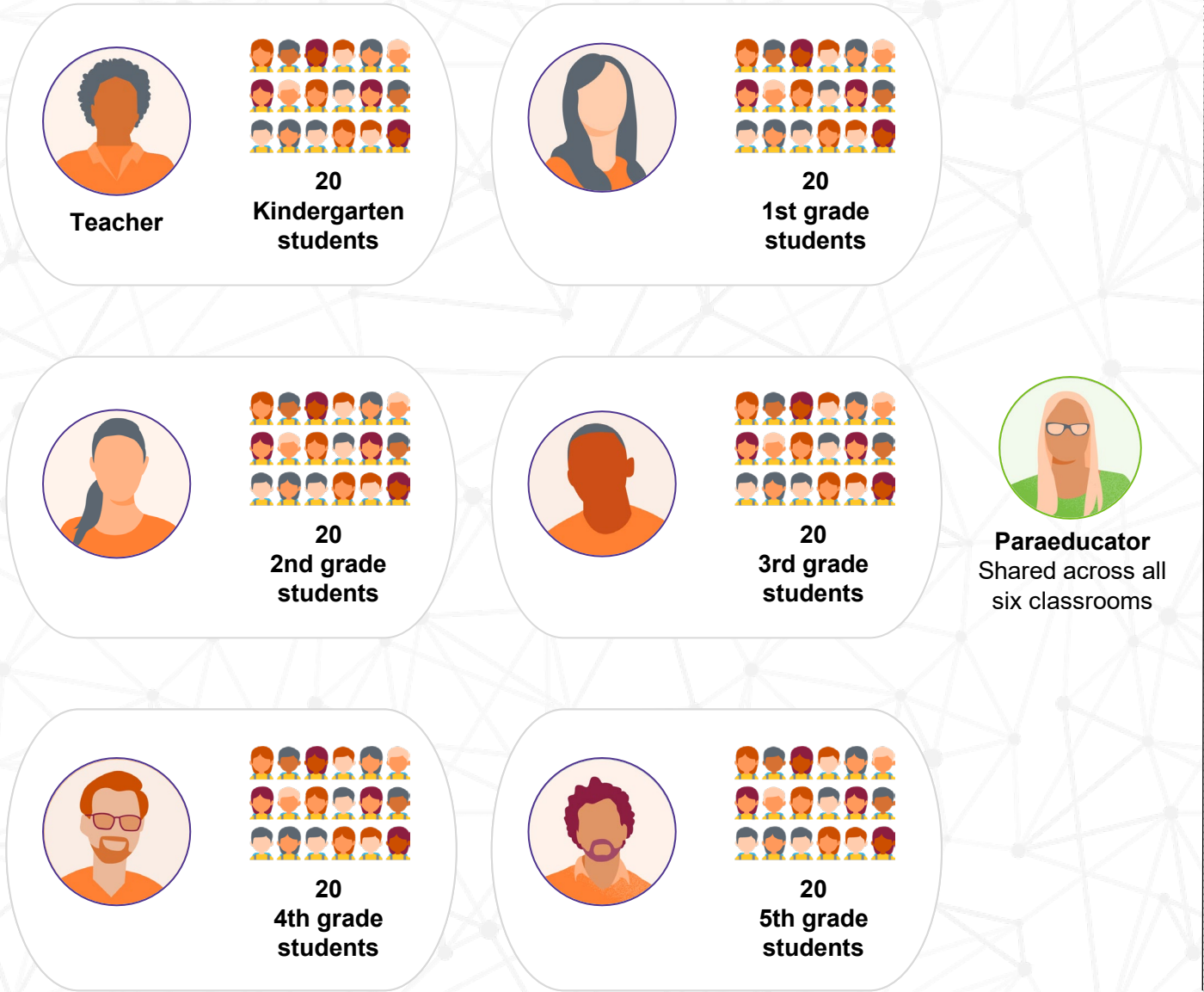


Student Success Coaches

MTSS Check-in & Check-out
Work with 15 learners each



Small K-8 school



Small K-8 school with teams





The Next Education Workforce™ seeks to

1. Provide all students with deeper and personalized learning by building teams of educators with distributed expertise, and
1. Empower educators by developing better ways to enter the profession, specialize and advance.

We have teams. How is this different?



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students



1 teacher
25 students

PLC ≠ Next Education Workforce Team

(but are very helpful to starting this work)

KEY: INTERDEPENDENCE



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Lead Teacher Job Description

New role: Lead teacher

A customizable job description for team-based models

This role description is intended to be customized based on the unique needs of each school district. It was co-created with our partners in [Kyrene School District](#) and [Mesa Public Schools](#) and is informed by [Opportunity Culture's Multi-Classroom Leader](#) role.

[Click here](#) to create your own copy in GoogleDocs.

Position summary

In our district, educators work in teams with distributed expertise to support a shared roster of students. The teams—typically comprising credentialed teachers, paraeducators, aspiring teachers, specialists, and/or community educators—use formative data and other evidence of student learning to move educators and students fluidly across multiple shared spaces, prioritizing deeper and personalized learning for students.

Each team is guided by a Lead Teacher who will support a shared roster of learners with the team and directly interact with students at least 50% of the time. Additionally, the Lead Teacher will guide the educator team in sharing responsibility for all elements of student support, instructional planning and delivery (e.g., lesson planning, instruction, data analysis).

The Lead Teacher leads the team in maintaining high expectations for student learning and ensures the team functions at a high level to serve all learners by strength and need. The Lead Teacher makes space for sharing team members' ideas and innovations to improve student learning. They co-plan, co-teach, model, coach and give feedback to their team members.



Some other sessions on lead teachers...

Feb 5, 2025

12:30 PM - 1:15 PM (GMT-7)

Research and Policy

Panel Discussion

Insights from WestEd's Study of Lead Teachers in Mesa Public Schools

Join WestEd for a session exploring the findings from their study on the implementation and impact of lead teacher roles in Mesa Public Schools in Arizona. Discover how these roles are transforming instructional leadership and supporting teacher development. This session will include a panel discussion featuring district administrators and lead teachers from Mesa Public Schools, offering firsthand insights into the challenges, successes, and lessons learned from this innovative approach to staffing. Participants will gain practical strategies for implementing lead teacher roles and fostering collaboration across teams.

Feb 6, 2025

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM (GMT-7)

Team-based Models and Instruction

Panel Discussion

Lead Teacher Panel: Educator Experiences Leading Next Education Workforce Team-Based Models

Join us for a panel discussion featuring three lead teachers who are driving instructional excellence through team-based staffing. In this session, panelists will share their experiences leading teams and navigating the challenges and opportunities of their roles, including managing diverse team dynamics, supporting professional growth, and implementing dynamic student groupings to meet instructional goals.

Teacher Apprenticeship *Origins*

How can we eliminate the notion of a first-year teacher while creating low-cost pathways to the teaching profession?

Occupation approved by the USDOL in November 2021, and the first Registered Apprenticeship in Teaching program approved in Tennessee in January 2022

Registered Apprenticeship in Teaching programs are **now established in 46 states, 2 territories, and D.C.** to help expand low-cost pathways to the classroom



“Regular” Teacher Apprenticeship Framework



Apprentice completes a **degree or licensure program** from a teacher preparation program



For a minimum of one year, the apprentice gains **hands-on experience** in a K-12 classroom, under the guidance of a **mentor teacher**, working towards **mastery of on-the-job competencies**



Apprentice “**earns-and-learns**” as a full-time employee

Without Registered Apprenticeship	With Registered Apprenticeship
First-year teacher may have had limited clinical experience before becoming teacher-of-record.	First-year teacher has a robust training period , providing 1-4 years of full-time, hands-on clinical experience prior to becoming teacher-of-record.
Future teachers come from a variety of backgrounds with varying levels of connection to the school community.	Future teachers are “ Grow Your Own ” candidates, sourced from the school community, benefitting from a career ladder for paraprofessionals, while the school/district benefits from a reliable pipeline of future teachers.
Future teachers may have to leave the workforce temporarily to conduct unpaid student teaching experience.	Teacher apprentices “ earn-and-learn ” while working towards their licensure/degree.
Wraparound services for future teachers are inconsistent.	Income-eligible teacher apprentices may access wraparound supports from their local workforce board.
Ultimately, teacher apprenticeship results in students experiencing well-prepared and representative teachers who are more likely to remain in their school community.	

Lead Teacher Apprenticeship Framework



Apprentices (non-lead teachers in team teach model) complete **microcredential coursework** aligned to lead teacher competencies



For a minimum of one-year, apprentices **work alongside the lead teacher**, who is also the mentor teacher, **developing competencies** of the lead teacher role



Apprentices earn a **full-time wage** as team teacher while working towards **lead teacher credential**

North Dakota's Work in Registered Apprenticeships & Strategic School Staffing



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The Why: We Had a Problem!

- Statewide Teacher Shortage.
- Decline in Educator Preparation Programs student enrollment.
- Increase desire for alternative pathways.



The North Dakota Model for Apprenticeships

Our model uses a grow-your-own approach, which allows the apprentices to remain in their community, continue working in the school district, and support themselves while they pursue their degrees.



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Registered Teacher Apprenticeships

- Registered Teacher Apprenticeship application
 - ✓ Approved in December 2022
- SAEF grant funding awarded in June 2023
 - ✓ \$700,999 base funding
 - ✓ \$3.7 million in competitive funding
- RFA released
- Awardees announced
 - ✓ Round One – January 2024, (39)
 - ✓ Round Two – April 2024 (15)
 - ✓ Round Three – July 2024 (57)
 - ✓ Round Four – November 2024 (31)
- Implementation – spring and fall 2024



Earning & Learning



Grow Your Own: Para to Teacher Pathway

NEWS FARGO

Fargo Public Schools aims to fill teaching jobs through 'grow our own' program

The Fargo school district is using multiple methods to help paraeducators and other staff obtain the credentials needed to become teachers.



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A Collaborative Effort

- Small SEA
- Separate Entities
- North Dakota's Team:
 - ✓ NDDPI – Laurie Matzke, Assistant Superintendent
 - ✓ Education Standards and Practices Board – Dr. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director
 - ✓ Career and Technical Education – Wayde Sick, State Director
 - ✓ Office of Apprenticeship – Barry Dutton, State Director
 - ✓ Contracted Liaison – Dr. Lynn Hammonds, Program Administrator
 - ✓ NCGYO – David Donaldson, Founder and Managing Partner

How We Leverage Multiple Funding Sources

Currently, in North Dakota, we are planning to utilize the following funding sources in our GYO programming:

- IDEA – Special Education
- Title I
- ESSER
- SAEF Grant through USDOL
- State General Funds
- WIOA – Job Service ND
- Philanthropic Funding

Strategic School Staffing Models

- Conventional one-teacher, one-classroom model of staffing schools is increasingly unsustainable.
- [Next Education Workforce Initiative](#) has been at the forefront of pioneering work focused on [strategic school staffing models](#).
- The model reimagines how educators collaborate and deliver instruction to students by emphasizing team-based staffing.
- North Dakota, is advancing education and innovation within our college teacher preparation programs and North Dakota's school systems.



Lead Teacher Pilot to Statewide Scale-up Efforts

- Teams comprised of ND Legislators and educators from ND visited the Next Education Workforce staffing model in Arizona.
- ND recognized a unique opportunity to blend team-based staffing models with the Registered Apprenticeship work.
- Pilot initiative in several North Dakota public school districts.
- ND would then be in a position to replicate this work across the state.

Lead Teacher Registered Apprenticeship

- Northern Cass & Fargo – pilot districts
- Lead Teacher Apprenticeship being pursued through USDOL
- Lead Teacher Job Description
- Secured a \$140,000 grant through the Burgum Foundation for this work
- SAEF Base grant funding
- Working to secure philanthropic funding





A Continuum for Registered Apprenticeships

**General
Paraprofessional
Certificate
&
Educator Pathway**

**Para-to-Teacher
Apprenticeship**

**Lead Teacher
Apprenticeship**

**Principal
Apprenticeship**



Our Supporters



**Mary Lou Fulton
College for Teaching
and Learning
Innovation**

**Arizona State
University**



Coursework (to launch at ASU Fall 2025)

1	Understanding what it means to be a lead teacher
2	Building and sustaining team culture
3	Communication within and beyond educator teams
4	Creating and maintaining systems and structures for effective teams
5	Identifying and leveraging the team's distributed expertise
6	Leading team-based planning for instruction
7	Leading team-based instruction
8	Leading team-based data analysis and action
9	Coaching and mentoring colleagues in a team-based staffing model
10	Leading self-improving teams



Impact that we anticipate

- **Filling Local Teacher Shortages:** Our program addresses teacher shortages by creating a reliable local pipeline of future teachers.
- **Retention of Experienced Educators:** Paraprofessionals transitioning to teaching roles bring valuable classroom experience and demonstrate strong commitment.
- **Community Connection:** North Dakota's Grow Your Own approach fosters community connection.
- **Cost-Effective Teacher Preparation:** Our approach allows paraprofessionals to earn their certification while working, reducing financial strain.
- **Retention in the Profession:** We give career advancement opportunities to teachers so they can stay in the classroom.



Strategic School Staffing Summit 2025

Feb. 5–6, 2025 | virtual

Join hundreds of stakeholders from across the education ecosystem to share ideas, strategies, practices and conditions that enable a more diverse, team-based education workforce.

CODE: WORKFORCE

ASU Mary Lou Fulton College for
Teaching and Learning Innovation
Arizona State University



QUESTIONS?

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