TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION: A Global Perspective

A paper to inform the 2021 International Summit on the Teaching Profession

Barnett Berry
Linda Darling-Hammond
Anthony Mackay

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SC TEACHER

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ABOUT SC-TEACHER

SC-TEACHER conducts, synthesizes, and disseminates high-quality research as well as narratives on the impact of teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention policies and practices on teaching effectiveness in South Carolina in support of equitable learning for all children. Housed at the University of South Carolina College of Education, SC-TEACHER is a designated Center of Excellence by the state's Commission on Higher Education.

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FOREWORD

In the midst of a global pandemic and on the heels of decades of an expanding teacher shortage, we have yet to fully acknowledge research findings on what drives teachers from the classroom. Nor have we addressed the educational inequities present in our systems and laid bare by shifts to hybrid and virtual classrooms. Furthermore, our young people need a different system than the one we have today, one that will prepare them for living and working in an increasingly interconnected world and a future of work that transcends national boundaries. It is time for us think strategically about teacher leadership in a global context. Driven by evidence from around the world, Barnett Berry, Linda Darling-Hammond and Anthony Mackay provide a salient portrait and powerful demonstrations of teacher led, whole child education in action and in service of children, schools and communities. The authors provide a way forward for each of us in reimagining our education systems to work in service of teachers' opportunities to lead and collaborate, as well as the ways in which we begin to recognize and value teachers' expertise.

Whole child education requires PK-12 educators to work more closely with each other in using evidence-based teaching practices. It also requires them to collaborate with an array of early childhood caregivers, afterschool providers, and other helping professionals who can support their students' academic, physical, mental, and social well-being in and out of school. Whole child education cannot be fully realized without building adult capacity – which has significant implications for how teachers are recruited, prepared, developed, assessed, and compensated – and developed as leaders. The University of South Carolina (UofSC) made a major commitment to whole child education with the launch of ALL4SC where we marshal resources across the entire university and beyond to reimagine education – from cradle to career – in our state. Doing so requires re-thinking the roles of teachers.

Our College of Education is prepared to do its part – from the design of new innovative preparation programs that are diversifying the educator workforce to support for induction teachers, and into an earnest look at the very design of our College and its ability to "un-university" itself to be responsive, nimble, and of service to educational communities within our state and beyond. In South Carolina we have a large number of National Board Certified Teachers who have not been fully tapped for their knowledge and skill. I am confident that we, in concert with our partners, can provide the fuel necessary to realize the ambitious goals set forth by Barnett, Linda and Tony. I am equally confident that we can do even more if we engage in this work together, leveraging the skills and expertise across states and around the world in service of a more equitable and just educational system.

– Thomas E. Hodges, Interim Dean, College of Education, University of South Carolina

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic disrupted the schooling of approximately 1.6 billion children and youth in over 160 nations.[1] It has exposed the deep wounds in education systems across the world. The dramatic pivot to remote teaching exposed profound inequities in education and in the *out-of-school* factors essential to student outcomes, such as the basic health of children and their families, food and housing security, access to internet. Yet at the same time, the pandemic created both a felt need and a wide range of opportunities to reinvent education in ways that attend to the whole child and the whole community, opening up new roles for educators and possibilities for recreating schools as institutions.[2] This report describes how teacher leadership has created opportunities to rethink education so that it better meets the needs of students and the aspirations of communities.

In this report, we provide an evidence-based foundation for developing a teacher leadership framework by documenting (1) where and how teachers are leading to make a difference for whole child education, (2) growing evidence on the effects of collaboration on teacher efficacy and teaching effectiveness, and (3) teachers' access to collaborative opportunities and leadership. We close with an approach for developing teacher leadership for the new normal of schooling that we believe must be less about individual teacher leadership and more about a system of leading teachers.

Disruptions and Deepening Inequities

While some school systems – like Singapore and Finland – have been relatively well-positioned to quickly implement distance learning,[3] the shift to virtual classrooms created major challenges of many kinds in most communities. The huge inequities of the digital divide were only part of the problem. Even where students had internet access at home, they frequently struggled with family crises, trauma, and learning barriers that no technology or new app could help them resolve.

At the 2020 International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP), education, government, and teachers union leaders from 35 nations recognized that students across the globe had been "isolated, deprived of social opportunities with their peers, facing stress related to their families' employment uncertainty" and dealing with these "unprecedented challenges (was) far beyond the capacity of even the best-prepared and most well-meaning teacher." [4]

These challenges were piled onto others that had already weakened the capacity of the teaching profession in many countries. For example, a 2018 survey by Education International found that over 50 percent of their affiliates reported that their countries were facing teacher shortages as their working conditions continued to "deteriorate."[5] In addition, a RAND survey – conducted before the COVID-19-induced disruptions in schooling – found that 4 in 10 American teachers who recently voluntarily resigned did so because of *stresses and disappointments with their work*, and more than double of those reported that their salaries were insufficient.[6] These shortages, along with high attrition rates, nearly always occur in schools serving the highest need and least-resourced students, further deepening inequality.

Early in 2021, UNESCO data indicated that students worldwide had lost two-thirds of a school year due to school closures.[7] An analysis by McKinsey & Co found that the impact of the pandemic on K–12 student learning in the United States left students on average five months behind in mathematics and four months behind in reading by the end of the school year. Their study showed that COVID-19 and the consequences of school disruptions "widened preexisting opportunity and achievement gaps, hitting historically disadvantaged students hardest." With so many children without proper internet access and home supports, many teachers "turned (themselves) into contortionists as they strove to support their students in any way they could, no matter how unusual."[8]

Opportunities Amidst Disruptions

Yet World Bank researchers have concluded that despite the "overwhelming consequences" of the pandemic for students and those who teach them, the global crisis "has also been an extraordinary time for learning." During pandemic-induced disruptions, students learned many of the "soft skills" needed for life success.[9] Pasi Sahlberg, in his critique of the almost exclusive focus on academic learning loss when schools closed for face-to-face instruction, asserted that learning from home helped students become more independent, self-directed, and resilient as learners. [10]

And despite the enormous disruptions in teaching and learning, the pandemic seemed to shine a spotlight on teachers as leaders as they sought out each other to solve problems their students, schools, and communities were facing.[11] The World Bank noted that:

> **2020 marks a dramatically different childhood experience that these young people will remember for the rest of their lives and a different teaching experience where teachers have had to rapidly adapt, be creative, and shift roles.**[12]

Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, reflecting on their experiences working with a global network of schools, found that, for *some* teachers, COVID-19 "unleashed a wealth of energy in innovative, collaborative, and laser-focused problem-solving." They concluded that the pandemic has "arrived at a time when it can inadvertently become a catalyst for deepening professional capital."[13]

Many reports have surfaced how teachers have turned to each other in the time of school closures — offering simple technical assistance in using new technologies, curating resources for each other, using social media platforms to share resources from around the world, and developing new innovative pedagogies in the face of the shared ordeal of the pandemic. The disruptions in teaching and learning have

begun to change the role of teachers, including remote coaching programs and leading virtual EdCamps and EdTech hotlines. And in some school communities, distributed leadership has become the "default" mode of leading – often "through absolute necessity, rather than by design."[14]

In the United States, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards developed a set of recommendations for policy and education leaders "to recognize, engage, and support teachers who are seizing the opportunity to step up to lead at this time of national crisis." [15] (See box.)

However, currently the U.S. has almost 130,000 National Board Certified Teachers who have met high and rigorous standards of accomplished teaching that "demanded reflective inquiry," but too few have had opportunities to "imprint" their work with peers and lead in a deep and sustained way.[16]

As part of an exploratory investigation, we have found that teachers across the globe, despite many obstacles, took it upon themselves to create more space for personalized student learning; rethink the school schedule to allow for collaboration among educators, families, and students; and capitalize on their professional networks to learn and share their expertise in support of student learning.[17] As Yong Zhao pointed out in a recent conversation with us, now is the time "to learn from teachers' reflections" regarding what has been learned about teaching and learning, and their leadership.[18]

Lessons on Leading During the Pandemic from National Board Certified Teachers

Narratives of National Board Certified Teachers, pointed out how leadership from the classroom served children and families in powerful ways. Jose Vilson in New York City used virtual communities and social media to deliver math lessons on Instagram. Lauren Jewett in Louisiana used evidence-bases lessons around social-emotional learning and trauma-informed education to support the well-being of students and fellow teachers. Susan Solomon in Michigan repurposed her classroom maker space 3D printers to manufacture hundreds of masks and face shields for front-line medical workers.

Source: Behrstock-Sherratt, E., Brookins, P., and Payne, G. (2020). Retrieved from https://www.nbpts.org/wp-content/uploads/Covid-Teacher-Leadership.pdf

TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION

The pandemic – coupled with a growing awareness of the emerging science of learning and development[19] – has created a much clearer focus on the need for a "whole child" approach to education. Whole child education refers to educators attending to students' academic, social, and emotional development in learner-centered and culturally relevant ways that encompass their families and communities. When educators meet these goals, schools benefit from partnerships with a wide range of community organizations and local agencies – from food banks to local businesses to health and social service agencies.

At the 2020 ISTP, the education ministers and union leaders pointed to growing "public recognition" of teachers' expertise and professionalism and the need for schools to "serve as centralized hubs for community resources, social supports, and access to enrichment activities."[20] In the United States, community schools – developed from the vision of the settlement house movement that began in England and was carried by Jane Addams to the US in the 1880s – have been designed to support this vision, and have recently been expanding. The Brookings Institute has developed a blueprint for a "next generation of community schools" to address deep inequities in learning opportunities (and the impact of COVID-19) by "integrating, rather than siloing, the services that children and families need."[21]

Teachers have championed this approach to meeting children's needs for decades. Their significant leadership has created equity-oriented, child-centered school models, from the international progressive school movements that spawned Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia approaches through the work of Paulo Friere, Debbie Meier, and others in the movements to redesign schools in the 1960s, 1990s, and today.

In the United States, the factory model schools designed by scientific managers in the early 1900s have produced large, anonymous, violence-prone high schools with high drop-out rates. A major effort to rethink this model led teacher teams in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles and elsewhere to create thousands of smaller personalized school models that have proved much more successful. These democratically-run, de-tracked schools have been organized around teaching teams and advisory systems that provide personalized supports for students and strong engagement with families. The teacher-designed schools – which also offer experiential education rooted in community concerns and funds of knowledge, along with connections to community organizations and service providers – have proven to increase school success, graduation rates, and access to college in high-poverty communities.[22] One of these models, designed by a team of New York City teachers to serve new immigrant students, now supports schools in the International High Schools network in several states. Teachers designed the International High School in Oakland, CA, to support students in ways that enabled them to survive and to thrive during the pandemic. (See box.)

Collaborating to Support Students at Oakland International High School

At Oakland International High School, a school for recent immigrants in Oakland, CA, approximately 29 percent of students arrived in the United States as unaccompanied minors and 33 percent were identified as homeless in 2019. Some have lost family members to violence; some come to school hungry; some face risks simply getting to and from school. All are English learners, and most live in poverty. Across the country, most students like them experience limited learning opportunities and barriers to success at school. But Oakland International students thrive at surprisingly high rates. In 2019, the most recent year of data available, 93 percent of students had graduated within five years, and 59 percent were deemed prepared for college and careers. The majority took and passed the rigorous A–G courses required for admission to California state universities. This compares to a graduation rate of only 62 percent and a college and career readiness rate of only 26 percent overall for other English learners in Oakland Unified School District.

Why the difference? As a community school, Oakland International High School has an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth development, and engagement with families and communities. The school directly addresses the out-of-school barriers to learning faced by recently arrived immigrant students. Available supports include free legal representation to students facing deportation, after-school tutoring, English as a second language (ESL) classes for parents (provided by the nonprofit Refugee Transitions), mental health and mentoring services at the school wellness center, medical services at a nearby high school health clinic, and an after-school and weekend sports program run by Soccer Without Borders.

The school also relies upon its collaboration structures to ensure it is meeting students' needs. Like other schools affiliated with the Internationals Network, Oakland International High School is designed so that grade-level teaching teams composed of a math teacher, an English teacher, a social studies teacher, and a science teacher share a group of students and meet at least weekly as a team, along with the counselor attached to that cohort, to discuss their common students and their interdisciplinary curriculum planning. The school's attention to collaboration also extends to families and communities. To engage families as partners, Oakland International teachers and staff conduct at least two home visits each year to develop relationships with families. They also encourage and support parent participation on school teams that develop programs and determine budgets. Staff also participate in immersive "community walks" designed by parents, students, and community leaders in which they visit important landmarks and meet with community leaders and families. Community members also serve on the school's site leadership team and the Coordination of Services Team, which help determine the best supports for students and families. Team members review student attendance and other data sources each week to determine which students would benefit from outreach, home visits, or other interventions. Because the school values the knowledge and engagement of teachers, families, and community members, the school climate is infused with trusting relationships that support student well-being. Oakland International High School is just one of many community schools across the United States that have found a way to become a true hub for the communities they serve and to provide students, families, and staff with the support they need to be successful.

Sources: Adapted from Coalition for Community Schools. (2017). 2017 community schools award profiles; Maier, A., & Levin-Guracar, E. (n.d.). Performance assessment profile: Oakland International High School. Learning Policy Institute. Outcome data from California Department of Education School and District Dashboards.

Teacher-led teams in community schools have also led the way in making education relevant to students' lives and communities. For example, at the start of the pandemic when schools were physically closed in Los Angeles, teachers designed an interdisciplinary project at the UCLA Community School as they transitioned to virtual schooling. This unit asked students to investigate the biological basis of the pandemic and the social issues affecting their community.

This 10-week inquiry process helped students understand the disparate impact of the pandemic on communities of color and the responses of local students, teachers, and parents. After reading articles and reviewing current data and the latest research on the virus, students reported on how these issues were affecting them, their families, and their communities. Rather than disengaging as so many young people did

during the pandemic, these students were eager to participate because they were learning something they deeply cared about and could use to improve their own lives and those of their loved ones.

Teachers around the world have been leading in their work to find ways to connect students and families to school, digitally and in other ways, throughout the pandemic. They have been actively reaching out to the community to ensure access and to share ideas as they joined with one another in rapid-fire learning and with parents in creating partnerships for educating children. As Ashok Pandey noted of teachers in Delhi, India:

> **Teacher leadership has been redefined, reflecting a shift from conventional positional roles – coordinators, faculty heads, headmistresses, or vice-principals – ascribing power and authority to the holder. Teacher leadership is now determined by the proactive roles that teachers play, initiatives they undertake, and the support they render to leadership, students, and parents. Teacher leaders are the 'go-to' teachers and retain the respect and trust of colleagues. The pandemic has offered new avenues, and many teachers have demonstrated that they are resourceful during a crisis, leading content design, facilitating capacity building as peer leaders, mentoring, and readily adopting and catalyzing change within an organization.**[23]

To support this process of catalyzing change, which is essential to "build back better," countries will need to empower teachers to develop innovations for the future of education.[24] At the 2020 ISTP, education ministers and union leaders expressed "much optimism" and recognized "creative innovations" that have unfolded during the pandemic. However, they shared deep concern about inequities in student opportunities and outcomes deepening in the years ahead.[25] The current system of schooling and leadership is not poised to take advantage of recent efforts to bridge the digital divide, improve outreach to families, and use technology-driven innovations to improve teaching as well as teacher collaboration.

The current system of schooling and leadership also is not positioned to spur deeper, more equitable learning. According to Jal Mehta and Sarah Fine, whole child education that incorporates deeper, more equitable learning for every student requires a new grammar of schooling. Students produce knowledge and learn by doing, and teachers facilitate learning and lead in a system of distributed leadership both in schools and with communities.[26]

Teachers who are teaching in community schools focused on deeper learning principles take on many new roles as relationship-builders, collaborative leaders, problem-solvers, critical change agents, and community members. They create learning spaces that meet the needs of the whole child.

Teachers have reported these roles are not "add-ons," but rather represent a radical shift in how teachers view and conduct their work.[27]

Leadership efforts of the past have tended to tinker around the edges of meaningful change. These efforts focused solely on strategically managing human capital, developing and using individual talent without sufficient attention to the social capital that educators must develop and use with other professionals.[28] The traditional one teacher/one class model of classroom teaching and top-down leadership of schooling are out of sync with the prospects for this new normal of education.[29] In the future of education, Yong Zhao makes the case that teaching must become "the sum of the entire community of teachers" as they take on varied roles as life coaches, curators of opportunities and resources for learning, and project leaders as well as community organizers.[30]

As Spillane, Morel, and Al-Fadala have noted, the expansion of the kinds of school improvement efforts we've described has been stifled by the lack of a multi-level perspective on educational leadership. In the future, the focus of education leadership is a "coordination challenge" that is largely about "structuring interdependencies among relations and resources" and accounting for many ancillary actors – organizations and individuals – that are critical to the work of the educational sector, including government and non-government actors, both non-profit and for-profit.[31]

Anchored in the evidence on multi-level perspectives on leadership, Learning Forward is in the process of revising its professional learning standards for educators to emphasize individual and collective capacity as well as the importance of teachers spreading their expertise to each other. OECD has called for "rethinking and rewiring" education systems, with frontline practitioners leading the transformation. As Andreas Schleicher, director of education for OECD, made clear in a report from Hundred.org:

> **The challenge (with COVID-19) is to build on the expertise of our teachers and school leaders and enlist them in the design of superior policies and practices. This is not accomplished just by letting a thousand flowers bloom; it requires a carefully crafted enabling environment that can unleash teachers' and schools' ingenuity and build capacity for change.**[32]

The *new normal* of schooling requires more of teachers as leaders. In some ways, we believe that everything that needs to be done to create a system of teacher leadership for whole child education is being done somewhere. However, we need to learn more about how to create and sustain these systems in different contexts.

TEACHER COLLABORATION AS THE FOUNDATION FOR WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION AND TEACHER LEADERSHIP

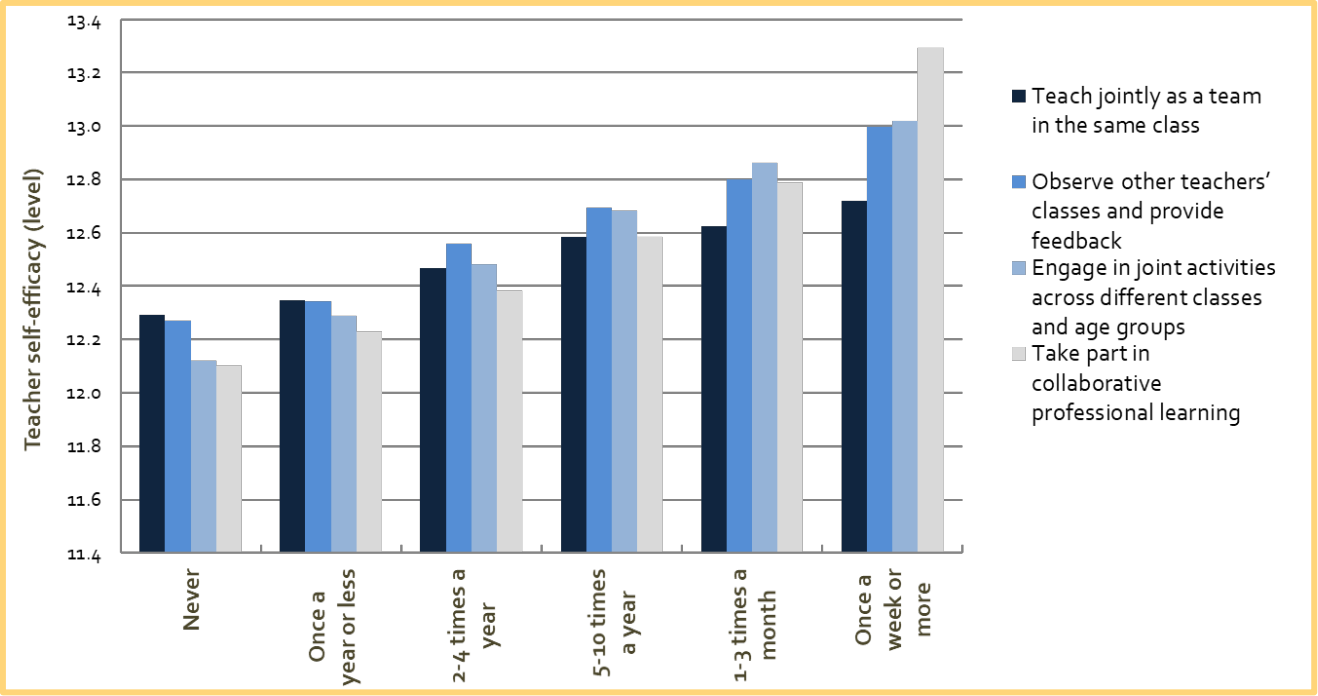
A key aspect of building this "carefully crafted enabling environment" is developing settings within which teacher collaboration and distributed leadership are core elements of school design. New school designs developed by U.S. teachers have transformed schedules to provide opportunities for teaching teams to meet and plan together around both curriculum content and children's needs, as well as school decision making. Schools in Shanghai and Singapore, among others, have long been designed to do this.[33] It is no surprise that more effective schools have hardwired these kinds of opportunities into their work.

A growing body of research has established that effective professional development that produces gains in student learning is intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, and classroom-focused.[34] One large-scale study by John Papay and Matthew Kraft noted that teachers who worked in schools with strong professional environments that provide opportunities for effective professional development, peer collaboration, and meaningful feedback improved their effectiveness, over time, by 38 percent more than peers in schools with weak environments.[35] Dylan Wiliam's work has found that teachers learn to teach more effectively when they serve as resources for one another, when they activate ownership of their own learning, and when feedback supports them in regulating their own teaching strategies.[36]

The qualities of these more positive and professional working environments have been shown to serve as critical building blocks for developing *collective teacher efficacy*, which emerging research suggests is one of the most important factors influencing student achievement.[37] In fact, OECD analyses of the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) survey data showed that opportunities for teacher collaboration in countries around the world were strongly associated with teachers' sense of efficacy, along with their willingness and ability to implement innovative practices associated with deeper learning and new technologies, and their satisfaction with teaching.[38] (See Table 1 below.)

Among the enabling conditions for building collective teacher efficacy is the extent to which teachers are sharing practice. The more teachers are connected, the more accomplished they feel and become. Teachers gain confidence in their peers' ability to impact student learning when they have more intimate knowledge about each other's practice.[39] In addition, collective efficacy is enhanced by the extent of teacher leadership in a school.[40] Indeed, both the structure and density of social networks among teachers in schools is related to teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement.[41]

Table 1: Teacher Efficacy is Related to Collaboration Opportunities



Source: Developed from OECD. Talis 2013 Results: An International Perspective on Teaching and Learning. OECD Publishing.

Researchers have found that teacher learning and leadership are more about *peer influence* than positionality and that leadership is rarely "vested in one person who is high up in the hierarchy."[42] As Huizenga and Sczcesiul have found, teacher leadership is a "socially distributed phenomena" that develops over time as teachers gain efficacy.

To do so, they must have "repeated opportunities" to reflect on what they master in the context of structured collaboration. Whether in the form of well-designed lesson study or similar practices, this type of professional development helps teachers get more comfortable with sharing perceived successes and failures and "cop[ing] with difficult situations."[43]

These studies on teacher collaboration implicate the importance of a more inclusive leadership model, where "leadership activity is *distributed* in the interactive web of leaders, followers, and situation."[44] Principals are key to creating the school cultures and structures that become either "empowering or marginalizing" for teacher leaders.[45] Indeed, collective leadership has a stronger influence on student achievement than individual leadership – and principals and district leaders do not lose power as others (including teachers) gain influence.[46]

ACCESS TO COLLABORATION AND TEACHER LEADERSHIP

These conceptions of collective learning and leadership are deeply entrenched in some countries' schools, motivating the teacher research teams in Shanghai and professional learning communities in Singapore, for example. However, they are rare in many others. And while improving teacher quality has become recognized as a common policy lever to improve student learning, as Motoko Akiba has noted, considerable differences in policy assumptions and contexts shape how different nations approach their respective teaching professions. Her analysis suggests that many policies have seemed to be mainly driven by the perceptions of *teache*r quality problems and solutions instead of research findings on *teaching* effectiveness and the conditions under which they learn to be effective.[47]

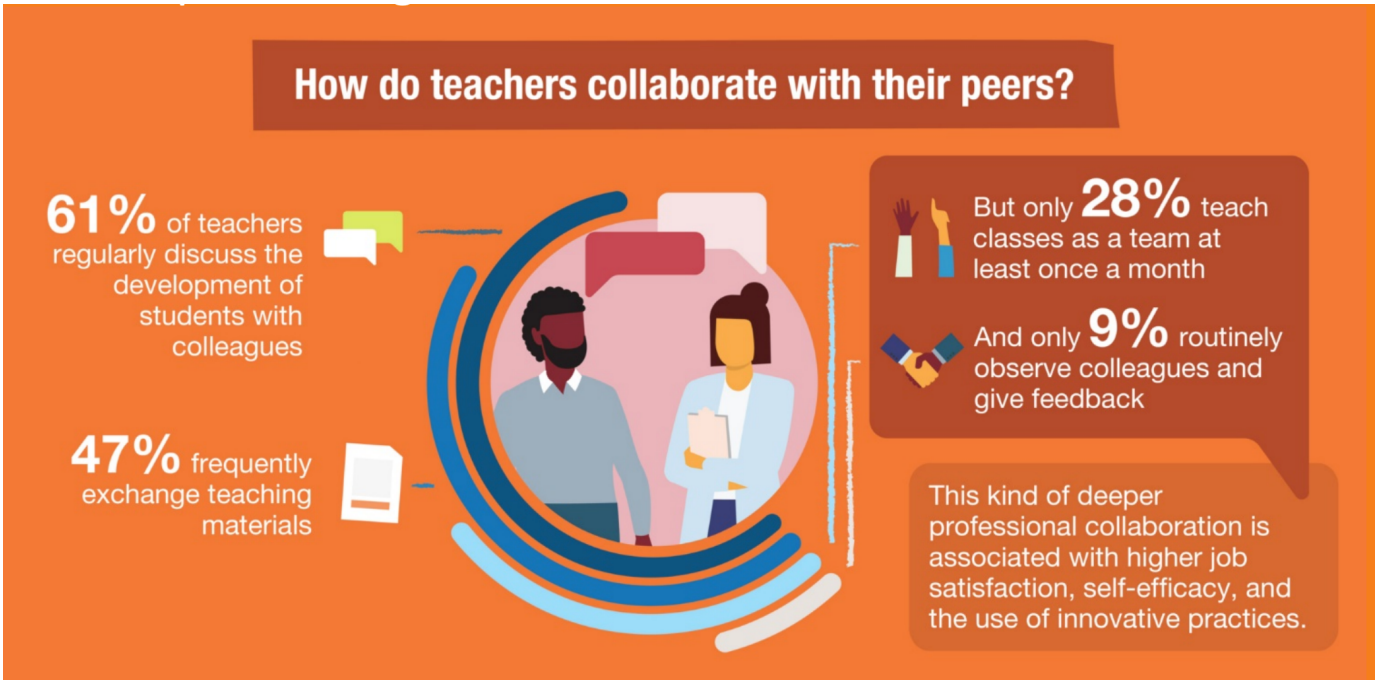
Teaching quality – and idea of teachers as leaders – must be understood and addressed by diverse education stakeholders. Major cross-national differences exist in teachers' identities and cultural values as well as indicators of professionalization.[48] This includes differences in ownership and control of teaching knowledge and practice and professional accountability.[49] For example, teaching evaluations in the United States have focused on assessing individual teachers on the basis of their students' relative value-added test scores, creating a competitive framework for comparisons.[50] They have been motivated by identifying individuals in need of coaching/support, with little attention to teacher collaboration or leadership.[51] By contrast, teaching evaluations in Singapore include a strong focus on how well teachers collaborate with and assist others and aim to identify teaching expertise and develop leadership roles, so that expertise can be shared.[52] But we can learn a great deal in examining these differences in better understanding how to create more opportunities for teachers to lead.

The TALIS survey, led by the OECD and administered in 2008, 2013, and 2018 offers considerable insight and information on teaching as a profession.[53]

- In 2013, most teachers reported working in isolation, with 50 percent never team teaching and only 30 percent ever observing their colleagues. By 2018, fewer were isolated in these ways: just under 40 percent never team taught and nearly 60 percent had some opportunity to observe their colleagues,[54] although fewer than 10 percent had opportunities for peer observation at least monthly.

- In 2013, teachers reported they wanted feedback on their teaching, but over 4 in 10 noted they did not receive any. By 2018, only 9 percent of teachers reported receiving no feedback.[55]

- In 2018 about 6 in 10 teachers reported that they regularly discuss the students' development with colleagues, and nearly half of teachers (47 percent) frequently exchange teaching methods (see Infographic 1).



Infographic 1: How do teachers collaborate with their peers?

Source: Developed from OECD. TALIS 2018: Implications for the US.

- Despite improvements in some collaborative opportunities, only 44 percent of teachers in 2018 reported participating in training based on peer learning and networking, despite the fact that professional development involving collaboration and collaborative approaches to teaching was reported as among the most impactful for them.

- Indeed, three-fourths of teachers who reported that their professional development had a positive impact on their teaching practice cited "opportunities for collaborative learning" as a key characteristic of their professional development.

Collaboration opportunities varied significantly across countries and trends differed over time. Austria and Turkey stood out among the most visible countries with increases in teacher collaboration. They report large, significant increases in the share of teachers engaging in collaborative activities since 2008 across all

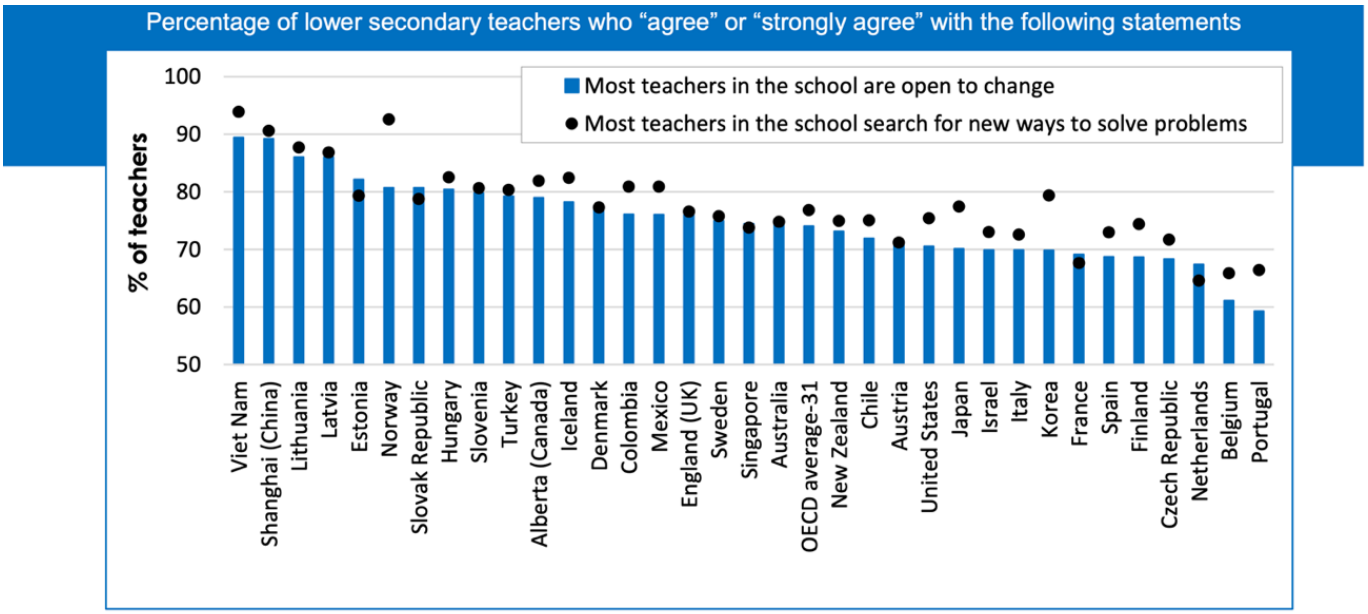
the different forms of collaboration TALIS examined. Between 2013 and 2018, 10 of the 32 countries and economies with available data saw significant increases in the share of teachers engaging at least once a month in team teaching and in providing feedback based on observation of other teachers' classes. Among these countries were Finland, the Flemish Community of Belgium, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Spain, and Sweden. Seven countries saw a significant decrease. Large increases in at least monthly collaborative professional learning occurred in 12 jurisdictions, noticeably in Shanghai (China) (+37 percentage points), Norway (+29 percentage points), Sweden (+28 percentage points) and Iceland (+17 percentage points). But there were decreases over the same period in New Zealand, Israel, Georgia, Portugal, and Romania.

Meanwhile, between 2013 and 2018, teachers' views on the collegiality in their environments improved in around one-third of the TALIS countries. However, professional collaboration "remains less prevalent in 2018 than simple exchanges and co-ordination between teachers." The data also revealed that "large proportions of teachers report never engaging in these deeper forms of collaboration."[56]

Leadership opportunities also matter to teachers. In both 2013 and 2018, teachers who reported opportunities to participate in school-level decision making had higher levels of job satisfaction and believed that teaching was a valued profession in their country. However, in 2018 only 56 percent of principals on average reported that teachers had a role in the school management team, and only 42 percent of principals reported that their teachers had a significant responsibility over a large share of tasks related to school policies, curriculum, and instruction.[57]

Nonetheless, teachers are ready to lead. As reported in the 2018 TALIS findings, OECD found that teachers are open to change and finding new ways to solve problems (See Table 2).[58]

Table 2: Teachers as Game Changers



Source: OECD (2019), *TALIS 2018 Results (Volume I): Teachers and School Leaders as Lifelong Learners*, https://doi.org/10.1787/1d0bc92a-en.

The prospects for teachers as leaders and "game changers" are promising. However, too few nations prepare and support teachers sufficiently with the right working conditions that let them engage in decision-making and fuel innovative practices. Looking across nations, though, everything needed for a system of teacher leadership that can transform schools is being done somewhere. As previously stated, we need to learn more about how to create and sustain these systems in different contexts – and how to make uncommon teacher leadership more common.

WHERE AND HOW NATIONS ARE SUPPORTING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

As Joe Hallgarten has noted, "teacher leadership has always been with us, but COVID has provided new needs, opportunities and examples."[59] Across the globe, technologically-fueled teacher networks continue to emerge as a powerful force to break down long-standing barriers that have isolated individual practitioners.

In Europe, the International Teacher Leadership (ITL) initiative, established by David Frost as part of HertsCam at the University of Cambridge in 2008, is advancing teacher-led innovations and is now supporting around 1,000 classroom experts in 100 schools in 15 countries. The work of ITL is anchored in the assumption that "all teachers and education practitioners have some leadership capacity" and non-positional teacher leaders will more likely "secure better learning outcomes for students."[60] The ILT has been both developing teachers as leaders and advancing research-based narratives by those who teach students and also lead in their schools and communities. Charles Weber and colleagues have launched an International Study of Teacher Leadership in 10 non-Western countries. They are seeking to deepen the knowledge base on how university-based and other leadership programs support teachers' skills as leaders in more hierarchical leadership structures ingrained within their school system and broader culture.

Since the start of the International Summits, some countries have been working more systemically on approaches to teacher professional learning and development. As reported at the ISTP over the last several years, several OECD jurisdictions have made considerable progress in advancing teacher leadership. Netherlands has developed a teacher-led innovation fund for classroom practitioners to implement innovative ideas across the system. Estonia has created collaborative learning communities within schools, led by master teachers. Finland has trained 5 percent of the nation's teachers, one for each of its 2,200 comprehensive schools, to serve as tutor teachers to increase peer learning and promote the effective use of technology in teaching. In the United States, the National Education Association launched its own Teacher Leadership Initiative and e-platform and micro-credentialing process to advance teachers as leaders and begin to measure their impact.

These examples of initiatives could be matched by hundreds of other discrete efforts. However, the need is to develop systems, like those described in *Empowered Educators,* an international comparative study of teacher and teaching quality in a set of the world's top-performing jurisdictions (New South Wales and Victoria, Australia; Alberta and Ontario, Canada; Shanghai, China; Finland; and Singapore). Each of these jurisdictions has *focused on building the interlocking components of effective systems* to support teaching, not just specific narrow-focused solutions. No one nation seemed to have all of the pieces of the teacher leader puzzle put together. However, the study surfaced a number of lessons for advancing teacher leadership for deeper, more equitable system of education. These lessons include the following elements.

First, leadership development is intentional. School systems create structures so teachers can take on new responsibilities based on their interests and skills. This also means there must be a way to identify those

interests and skills so promising teachers can "grow into new (leadership) positions." System leaders do not wait for prospective teacher leaders to apply. Instead, system leaders recruit teacher leaders actively into roles that are central to the transformations desired in schools.

Second, formal teacher leadership structures can enhance the system's capacity. Some jurisdictions like Singapore have organized a highly formal system of teacher leadership. A principal master teacher or lead specialist who earns as much as a school principal is trained for key leadership tasks and takes on the role of mentoring and supporting the work of professional learning communities. Career advancement is tied to results-oriented professional learning.

In Shanghai, teachers can achieve four levels of teacher leadership rank. Less than 10 percent reach the most accomplished level. Formal teacher research, conducted by school-based teams led by teacher leaders, is a key component of promotion. In both systems, developing and sharing expertise in systems available in every school is critical to the ongoing improvement of teaching.

Third, non-positional teacher leadership can also be impactful when explicitly cultivated and widely expected. In Finland, the system of teacher leadership can be highly informal and is in part fueled by an array of organizational tools and processes. For example, all teachers are expected to lead in various aspects of school life. Most principals teach at least part of a day or week – and in doing so blur the lines between those who teach and those who lead schools. Finland also supports resource teachers who are used in many different ways and whose specific roles may shift throughout the year. Teachers learn to lead, beginning in their preparation programs. The collaborative culture omnipresent in Finnish schools sustains this leadership.

How Finnish Teachers Learn to Lead

It is about well-prepared teachers and the way we can lead in so many ways…. It is the way teachers are prepared as researchers…. But it is also the working conditions. Because of the collaborative atmosphere, teachers are encouraged to be the leaders of their profession.

The school day varies for teachers…. Some teachers teach more or fewer courses inside of our six-week periods. Sometimes you may teach three or four seventy-five-minute lessons a day – some days you may only have one.

In America, we have heard principals refer to 'my school' and 'my teachers'; but in Finland, you will never hear them use those words. They always say, 'our school' and 'my colleagues.'

– Marianna Sydanmaanlakka, a Finnish teacher quoted in *Teacherpreneurs*.

Source; Berry, B. , Wieder, A. , and Byrd, A. (2013). Teacherpreneurs: Innovative teachers who lead but don't leave. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pasi Sahlberg and Timothy Walker have pointed to the paramount role of the Jory (an abbreviation for johtoryhmä or "management group"), a "teacher-powered" leadership team in Finnish schools in driving its success as one of the world's best education systems. They write, "We find that this leadership team, in which teachers work closely with the principal, greatly minimizes the us-versus-them mindset."[61]

Ontario's Teacher Learning and Leadership Program, launched in 2007 by the ministry and the Ontario Teachers' Federation, supports experienced teachers in undertaking self-directed professional

development, develops leadership skills for sharing their professional expertise, and facilitates knowledge exchange which begins with teams within schools and extends to teachers across entire provinces.

Fourth, thoughtful approaches to teacher evaluation can be a powerful lever to spread teaching expertise and teacher leadership. In Finland, teaching evaluation is more like a focused conversation or *kehityskekitty* – informed by the goals of the municipality while also valuing teaching performances related to cooperation, versatility, and initiative. In Finland, teaching evaluations are "reflective, participatory, and collective" consultations that take place during professional dialogues between an individual teacher and the principal or between a teacher and his or her peer teachers. In Singapore, teachers do not achieve the highest marks on their teaching evaluations unless they also help their colleagues grow professionally. In Australia, cycles of teaching, assessment, and reflection are part of the learning and evaluation process from the start of the career throughout the development of accomplished practice in the emerging teacher leadership system.

Finally, school systems can recognize the leadership of teachers in a variety of ways. In Ontario, Additional Qualification (AQ) courses are available to guide teachers in developing a range of knowledge and skills. Some AQ courses have been redesigned to be more customized and modular to encourage more teachers to participate and offer more opportunities for personalized learning around very specific skills – functioning much like micro-credentials. In New South Wales, teachers' pay is tied to levels of accomplishment, using a portfolio approach that values varied teaching expertise. Perhaps most importantly, these systems of empowered educators recognize teachers as leaders without them having to become an administrator. As one teacher from Ontario was quoted, "I am not a vice-principal, I am a teacher leader."

THE FUTURE OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION

In the face of the pandemic and its aftershocks, what is truly needed, now and in the future, is a larger array of teaching experts, both specialists and generalists, who are organized mostly horizontally and occasionally vertically. Teachers will need to have lots of room to move in and out of different roles, take on more or less responsibility, focus on more or fewer students, and serve in and out of online communities of practice, as well as in and out of their school buildings. As Joe Hallgarten asserted, the pandemic "unearthed" a wide array of teacher-led innovations. In efforts to build back "readier" schools, professional learning must go "beyond the implementation of reductive teacher career frameworks" common across the globe.[62]

For example, in *Teaching 2030,* Barnett Barry posited, with 12 accomplished teachers, a new educator workforce. In reallocating people and programs, school systems would begin to invest in the most highly accomplished teachers who could support an array of apprentices, adjunct and virtual teachers and would get recognition, reward, and time to do so. The redesigned workforce would include a wide range of other professionals including those from universities and community colleges as well as social and health service sectors. They would be organized to work with PK-12 educators to fully integrate the academic, physical, and socio-emotional supports that students need and deserve. Some teacher leaders would specialize as content curators and assessment experts as well as community navigators. Others would hold joint appointments with universities and other technical colleges as well as with social service and health providers.[63]

In addition, the Aurora Institute identified some of the roles teachers play in redesigned schools and need to play more routinely in whole child, deeper learning systems of education. Teachers as instructional designers support more personalized pathways and progressions. Teachers as coaches promote peer learning. Teachers as resource managers integrate community assets into a system of teaching. Assessment experts assemble and use student outcome data. Teachers as advocates address long-standing inequities in schooling. Change leaders navigate complex improvement processes (and we would add both in the school and community).[64]

System leaders have more work to do to fully develop a comprehensive approach to teacher leadership. What we currently know is that:

- Many teachers have discovered how to build schools that illuminate a vision for whole child education in new, more productive school designs. Those features can be – and need to be – backward mapped into policy.

- The pandemic has not just been about academic learning loss, but how teacher leaders have led an asset-based approach to teaching and learning grounded in a holistic vision of child, family, and community development that supports thriving.

- Successful schools and systems prioritize opportunities (time and resources) for teachers' collaborative professional learning and decision making as a critical – perhaps *the* critical – lever for improving teaching innovation and effectiveness.

- Building shared knowledge and collective efficacy in the teaching force, which is the most powerful approach to supporting student learning, requires changes in how we conceptualize educator time, roles, evaluation, and tasks so that collective practice, skill, and expertise are explicit goals.

- Teacher leadership strategies can capitalize on the power of informal learning and non-positional leading by teachers while also drawing on formal systems of recognizing and using their expertise.

- Teacher leadership for whole child education will likely require more horizontal forms of leading – implicating the development of career lattices, not just ladders – and more ways for teachers to document and share their expertise as well as work with allied professionals outside of the school and in the community.

With this paper, our intention has been to inform the deliberations of the 2021 International Summit on the Teaching Profession. By no means do we believe our analysis is complete. However, in synthesizing an array of research and recent reports, we have sought to shed some light on both the promise and prospects for a bolder brand of teacher leadership.

Rethinking teacher leadership for education transformation comes at a momentous time across the globe – the perils of pandemics and the decline of democracy as well as rapid advancements in technology for teaching and learning. Well over a decade ago, OECD pointed to the need to rethink school leadership. This was triggered by recognizing administrators – particularly principals and heads – are facing daunting challenges and rising expectations regarding what students needed to know and do, technological innovation, migration and globalization, and complex matters of school management and reform.[65] Now is the time for action for teachers as leaders.

In a 2021 paper, Valerie Hannon and Anthony Mackay pointed to a future of education that demands the rethinking of school leadership for:

- Creating a new public narrative that extends beyond individual schools and thinks about teaching and learning in a wider societal context and "leapfrogs" archaic institutional arrangements;

- Establishing learning ecosystems for every student that will bring together diverse providers – not only schools and colleges – but also non-formal learning institutions, private sector organizations, the creative and cultural sectors, businesses and tech companies;

- Driving deeper, more equitable student outcomes by providing for equitable school resources as well as the application of principles from the science of learning and development in reinvented models of schooling;

- Developing and scaling education innovation with "agility" that involves educators everywhere but also the most importance actors – the learners and their families and communities;

- Promoting a futures focus, with futures literacy as an essential leadership capability and a skill that everyone should acquire – empowering young people and their communities to be future-ready.[66]

No one school leader, or even a small group, can lead the work of schooling in the future. As Hannon and Mackay point out, given the challenges and opportunities "schools cannot do everything either: they need to incorporate themselves in nets of learning opportunities."[67] The recent evidence on distributed leadership is compelling. However, distributed leadership is insufficient for the task at hand. What is needed now is collaborative leadership, grounded in shared professional practice. And as Yong Zhao pointed out to us, the work of teacher leaders must be tightly connected to students' self-determination and leadership.[68] Teacher leadership, as the evidence suggests, is not a threat to current leadership of principals and heads as well as other educational leaders. It is a catalyst for accelerating student learning and antidote for the impossible job that so many school principals and heads currently have.

In closing, we do not have a list of specific recommendations for the Ministers and Union Leaders. Rather we call for a mindshift about teacher leadership and the creation of systems of leading teachers. Certainly, the use of new tools and processes is necessary to:

- Redesign teaching schedules and school structures.

- Rethink professional learning for the spread of teaching expertise.

- Create more space for innovations from teachers and more strategies for scaling those up in schools, districts, states, and provinces.

- Reconsider how teaching expertise is recognized, utilized, valued.

Technical shifts need to be made – and policy leaders and practitioners can adapt and use an array of evidenced-based policies and practices from across the globe. However, the use of adaptive thinking and behavior is of far more importance. The *system of leading teachers* we envision requires significant changes in values, beliefs, roles, relationships, and approaches to how schools and communities accomplish goals. This system will only work if teachers themselves co-design the system that they will need to co-own and execute on behalf of the ultimate beneficiaries – young people, families, and communities.

Teacher leadership should no longer be a program. Instead, teacher leadership will become a way of organizational life and play a central role in a coherent educational system of teaching, learning, and caring. It will value both formal and non-positional leadership whereby each influences the other.

As education gets turned upside-down, the hierarchical system of school leadership must be turned on its side. Many teachers are leading innovations in the midst of a pandemic, and now we must capitalize on opportunities for them to lead even more in the aftermath of it. As Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, writing in the early days of pandemic-induced disruptions in schooling, pointed out:

> **We're in a long, dark tunnel at the moment. When we emerge, our challenge will be to not proceed exactly as before, but to reflect deeply on what we have experienced, and take a sharp turn in education and society for the better.**[69]

Public schools everywhere are facing a future of rapid change, intensifying complexity, and growing uncertainty. Now more than ever, it is time for teachers to lead the transformation of their profession and our schools – and for government and union leaders to assist them in doing so. The young people of the world deserve no less.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

BARNETT BERRY is a Research Professor, and Senior Director for Policy and Innovation at the University of South Carolina (UofSC). In 2019, he returned to UofSC to develop and launch ALL4SC, a university-wide effort to support whole child education in the state. In the 1990s Barnett worked with the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and its state partnership network, leading to his founding of the Center for Teaching Quality, where he served as CEO for 19 years. Berry has authored more than 120 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters related to understanding the teaching profession. His two books, *TEACHING 2030* and *Teacherpreneurs: Innovative Teachers Who Lead But Don't Leave*, frame a bold vision for the profession's future and a system of learning for young people and those who teach them. In 2021, he was honored with James A. Kelly Award for Advancing Accomplished Teaching by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. He also serves as a Senior Research Fellow for the Learning Policy Institute.

LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND is the President and CEO of the Learning Policy Institute, which conducts and communicates independent, high-quality research to improve more equitable education policy and practice. She also is the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at Stanford University where she founded the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education and served as the faculty sponsor of the Stanford Teacher Education Program, which she helped to redesign. Darling-Hammond is past president of the American Educational Research Association and recipient of its awards for Distinguished Contributions to Research, Lifetime Achievement, and Research-to-Policy. From 1994–2001, she was executive director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, whose 1996 report *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* was named one of the most influential reports affecting U.S. education in that decade. In 2006, Darling-Hammond was named one of the nation's ten most influential people affecting educational policy. She led the Obama education policy transition team in 2008 and the Biden education transition team in 2020. Among her more than 500 publications are a number of award-winning books, including *The Right to Learn*, *Teaching as the Learning Profession*, *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World,* and *The Flat World and Education*.

ANTHONY MACKAY is CEO and Board Co-Chair of the Washington DC-based National Center on Education and the Economy. He was Inaugural Chair Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), Inaugural Deputy Chair of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), immediate past Chair, Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and immediate past Deputy Chair of New Zealand's Education Council. He is currently Co-Chair of the National Project, Learning Creates Australia; Deputy Chancellor, Swinburne University, Melbourne, Australia; and Honorary Senior Fellow of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne. Anthony is Co-Founder of the Global Education Leaders Partnership (GELP), and Foundation Board Chair of the Innovation Unit Ltd, England. He is an Expert Advisor to OECD/CERI, Consultant Advisor to the Asia Society's Global Cities Education Network, Senior Fellow IBE UNESCO; International Advisor to Learning Forward (USA); and Director, High Resolves Global Board. Anthony is the Moderator of the Annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession; Moderator of Ministerial Sessions and Key Debates at the Annual World Innovation Summit on Education (WISE) and Moderator of OECD's Global Education Industry Summit.

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