**Meeting**: Educator Working Group

**Date**: November 18, 2015 at 5:30PM-7:30PM

**Location**: Collette Education Center, Dover, DE

**Participants**: Representatives from the Delaware DOE, educators from around the state forming the Educator Working Group, consultants from TNTP

**Introductions**

Representatives from the DDOE welcomed Educator Working Group members. The chairs of the Educator Working Group introduced themselves. TNTP staff introduced themselves. Members of the Educator Working Group introduced themselves and described their view on what teacher leadership means.

The meeting facilitators outlined the agenda and objectives of the meeting. The group was asked if there were any additions to the agenda or desired objectives.

**Background**

A representative from the DDOE explained the importance of teacher career pathways for the state of Delaware.

A representative from TNTP provided details on teacher leadership initiatives in other states. He emphasized that the role of TNTP within the EWG process included providing additional context and literature around national trends.

The group asked how long these initiatives have been going on for. TNTP answered that, while the idea of teacher leadership pathways is fairly new, Houston’s leadership initiative has been underway for 3-4 years, and the Denver pilot began 2 years ago.

The group asked where these programs have been particularly successful. TNTP responded that Denver is a good example to highlight, given that their system empowered schools by allowing them the autonomy to either choose from sample roles created by the district or create their own leadership roles and apply for funding from the state.

A DDOE representative stated that other working groups were tasked to focus on the more technical aspects of teacher leadership roles, and that the goal of the EWG is to think about what teacher leaders could offer schools from the perspective of educators. She provided more background on work around career pathways and teacher leadership preceding the EWG. She explained that the CAECC was formed in 2014 to create meaningful leadership opportunities for teachers, and formed the EWG in order to better understand school needs and instructional practice. The EWG’s recommendations will go to the TAG as well as the CAECC to inform their discussions and the policy ultimately proposed.

**Group Process and Norms**

The facilitators explained that the EWG can offer two perspectives. The first is creating sample roles that show different forms teacher leadership could take. The second is articulating the right level of detail the state and districts can provide teacher leaders in order to enable success in their new roles.

The group received a handout explaining one teacher leader role that a member of the EWG has experienced in his school. The facilitators offered more detail on the sample role, and explained the importance of providing explicit role descriptions in order to provide teacher leaders meaningful expectations about what their role would entail and require.

The facilitators commented that, while the sample role is pedagogically focused, teacher leadership doesn’t necessarily have to involve just instructional practice. The EWG can begin with considering roles that focus on teaching, but can also evaluate more broadly whether there’s room for other types of teacher leadership.

The facilitators established several group norms in order to facilitate structured and productive discussion. The group agreed with these norms and added that they would like conversations to be solutions-oriented, that they would like members to read any literature provided, and that facilitators should ensure that all members receive pre-reading documents.

The group expressed concern about where the work of the EWG fits into prior efforts to establish teacher leadership, particularly given unresolved questions coming out of CAECC town hall meetings. The facilitators explained that the more controversial proposals from last year have been revised based on educator feedback. The facilitators suggested that time be set aside in the next EWG meeting to review the amended career pathways proposal and address lingering concerns. The group agreed that would be helpful, particularly so that they can communicate these changes to their colleagues. The facilitators noted that they will make sure to equip EWG members to have these conversations with their colleagues.

**Discussion on School Needs and Teacher Leadership**

The facilitators outlined that the goal of the EWG is to address two questions over the course of three meetings before January 18 (the next CAECC meeting). First, what do schools need in order to improve outcomes for their students? Second, what can teacher leaders do to address these needs, and where can they have the most impact?

The facilitator explained that, in order to end on time, the EWG will only begin a preliminary discussion on these questions tonight, but that the conversation will be continued over the course of subsequent meetings.

The group engaged in small group discussions and then presented their perspectives to the wider group.

A group member stated that students fundamentally need nutrition and a safe place. Hence, teachers can ensure that students get the best start to their day by eating a substantive breakfast in a welcoming environment. A teacher leader could establish family style, mentoring breakfasts in their school so that students begin their day with a healthy meal and teacher support.

A group member suggested that teacher leadership could address the gap left behind in schools with high needs students where Race to the Top funding has dissolved.

A group member suggested that teachers could serve as leaders for data and assessment within their school, reviewing assessments by content area and determining their necessity and usability.

A group member suggested that a teacher leader could provide leadership around standardizing and improving teacher evaluation within their school, offering peer to peer facilitation and survey administration.

A group member stated a need for technology support in their school, explaining that there is insufficient support at the district level to address technological issues.

A group member suggested that compensation for teacher leadership need not entail strictly financial compensation but could include other benefits like additional flexibility in scheduling.

A group member expressed a need for additional support around classroom management. Teacher leaders could provide mentorship to new teachers around communicating with other teachers and students in an empathic manner that takes into consideration their socioeconomic circumstances and community factors.

A group member suggested that teachers could provide additional leadership around supporting high school students considering college.

A group member suggested crisis management as one area of leadership potential.

A group member expressed a need within schools for more collaboration with industry and suggested that teacher leaders could coordinate meetings between teachers, students, and members of the workforce.

**Next Steps**

Facilitators highlighted the website for the CAECC (<http://caecc.us>).

Facilitators asked what dates would work for the group. The group expressed that December 8th and January 6th were dates where they were available. Facilitators asked if 5:30 was a good time to begin meetings. Members suggested 5PM. Members expressed that the meeting location was fine.