Purpose of the TAP Implementation Handbook

The *TAP Implementation Handbook* is an introductory planning tool for site-level or district-level implementation of TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement. It contains the “nuts and bolts” of the items and issues to consider in beginning the planning process of TAP.

In addition to the planning items and issues highlighted, the handbook also includes recommended timelines for development and essential steps for implementation. Please note that these are recommendations only and are devised around a fall-to-spring development cycle or a school year of development consideration prior to actual implementation. TAP development varies around the country, as do the issues and needs of each local district or school.

We encourage you to use this *TAP Implementation Handbook* as you pursue your goals of Teacher Excellence, Student Achievement and Opportunities for All.
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# Glossary of Terms

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Section 1

Becoming a TAP School
What is TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement?

Research has shown that the single most important school-related factor in determining student performance is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. However, despite the critical role that good teachers play, more and more skilled educators are leaving the profession, while fewer talented young people are pursuing it, leaving the nation’s schools with a shortage of talented teachers.

In 1999 the Milken Family Foundation introduced TAP, a new initiative developed to restructure and revitalize the teaching profession. TAP’s comprehensive, research-driven reform model provides career advancement opportunities; continuous on-site professional development; a fair, transparent accountability system; and differentiated compensation for teachers based on their performance in the classroom and the performance of their students. Often principals are also included in incentive pay; for them the performance compensation is based on school-wide student achievement and their own performance.

The importance of educator effectiveness, coupled with experience working with TAP’s implementation, catalyzed the establishment of an independent nonprofit called the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). TAP is NIET’s flagship initiative and is implemented in partnership with sponsoring agencies such as state departments of education and/or public and private school districts and schools.

By combining the TAP elements in a rigorous and effective strategy for reform, TAP and its partners are working to turn the teaching profession into a highly rewarding career choice throughout the nation. The real reward is the outstanding education available to each student.

TAP IS BASED ON FOUR INTERRELATED ELEMENTS.

1. **Multiple Career Paths:** TAP allows teachers to pursue a variety of positions throughout their careers—career, mentor and master teacher—depending upon their interests, abilities and accomplishments. As they move up the ranks, their qualifications, roles and responsibilities increase—and so does their compensation. This career path allows teachers to advance without having to leave the classroom. Along with the principal, the master and mentor teachers form a leadership team to deliver school-based professional support and to conduct evaluations with a high level of expertise.

2. **Ongoing Applied Professional Growth:** TAP restructures the school schedule to provide time during the regular school day for TAP teachers to participate in weekly cluster group meetings. Led by master and mentor teachers, cluster group meetings allow teachers to examine student data together, engage in collaborative planning and learn instructional strategies that have proven successful in their schools.

3. **Instructionally Focused Accountability:** TAP teachers are observed in classroom instruction several times a year by multiple trained observers, including principals and master and mentor teachers, using research-based rubrics for several dimensions of instructional quality. Evaluators are trained and certified on these rubrics, and leadership teams monitor the reliability and consistency of evaluations in their schools.

4. **Performance-Based Compensation:** TAP’s Performance-Based Compensation model provides differentiated options for educators to earn additional compensation each year. One method provides opportunities for all educators to earn additional compensation through a school-wide bonus system based on their performance in the classroom, their students’ achievement gains and the entire school’s achievement growth. Another method of performance-based compensation is master and mentor teacher stipends or augmentations based on additional roles and responsibilities within the school. These two options can be combined or used independently depending on available funding and the preference of school administrators.
**TAP Training and Technical Assistance**

NIET has developed and provides required formal trainings, as well as ongoing technical assistance for all TAP schools. Fees associated with these services are established through an agreement between the schools or districts and NIET.

**RELATIONSHIP AND SUPPORT FROM NIET TO SCHOOLS**

NIET provides formal and informal support to TAP schools. TAP implementation begins with presentations by NIET to schools and districts that provide information regarding the program. This sharing of information, or program development, provides the foundation from which schools can decide whether or not to adopt TAP.

The first eight days of CORE Training are recommended prior to the start of school. There is also a Startup of School Workshop led by the TAP leadership team and supported by NIET staff, when needed. This workshop orients the entire faculty to the processes of TAP and sets the expectations for the coming year. The Startup of School Workshop takes place before students return to school.

Ongoing school-based support and technical assistance is provided by either NIET staff or district staff trained by NIET throughout the year. We recommend the following options to support TAP implementation:

- **District TAP coordinator — this position:**
  - Is established when there is a significant number of schools within a single district implementing TAP (approx. three or more)
  - Is employed by the district implementing TAP
  - Spends 80 percent of the time in TAP schools
  - Coordinates and supports the implementation of TAP
  - Is trained and supported through NIET
  - Is funded by the district

- **Site visits by a national TAP program specialist:**
  - This program specialist works with a number of schools and/or districts throughout the country
  - Support is provided on a regular basis, based on the needs of the school or district
  - This support might also be in conjunction with a district TAP coordinator

TAP schools receive regular technical assistance and training from NIET. This training and support is provided throughout the year using both formal and informal methods. Formal training includes one- or two-day workshops provided three to four times per year, as well as access to NIET staff who provide answers to specific questions regarding implementation, coaching and school-level training.

NIET has developed support materials that are used in each TAP school, and these provide the framework for TAP implementation. These materials are distributed only to schools that have voted on and are formally implementing TAP.
TAP Training and Technical Assistance

THERE ARE ALSO FORMAL NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED FOR TAP SCHOOLS BY NIET:

National TAP Conference
The annual National TAP Conference provides the opportunity for states, districts and schools, as well as other stakeholders, to learn more about TAP, both its elements and how to put them into practice. The goals of the TAP Conference are to promote collaboration and the sharing of experiences among current TAP schools, to provide strategies to improve TAP implementation, to increase national awareness of TAP for people seeking to improve teacher quality and student achievement in their schools, and to provide training opportunities for current TAP teachers.

TAP Summer Institute (TSI)
The goal of TSI is to provide intensive training for leadership team members, focusing on detailed aspects of TAP. The focus of each TSI is determined by needs identified at TAP schools nationwide. Participants use thoroughly developed examples that link the processes of TAP implementation to instructional practices, focusing on improved student achievement. Participants leave TSI with materials to take back to their schools and utilize in support of ongoing applied professional growth. Sessions are led by NIET staff with support from state directors, district coordinators and regional executive master teachers, as well as expert master teachers and principals from effective TAP schools. TSIs are conducted in various regions across the country.

Summary
School-level support is of critical importance as schools make the often challenging changes to their structures resulting from implementation of TAP. As the growth of TAP continues nationwide, NIET is continually developing enhanced methods for providing the support and technical assistance necessary at the school level in the most effective and efficient manner. The strategy described above is being continually improved in order to best meet the needs of TAP schools and the financial and human capital capacity of NIET.

TAP support and technical assistance is provided in a manner through which districts and states currently implementing TAP contribute significantly to these efforts.

Information and technical support services include:
- TAP Web site: www.niet.org
- The annual National TAP Conference and TAP Summer Institute (TSI)
- On-site support, presentations and training by NIET staff
- TAP System Training Portal
- TAP evaluation app (tapObserver)

Training includes:
- The TAP CORE Training for leadership teams ( principals, master and mentor teachers)
- Access to the TAP System Training Portal
- Testing and certification of TAP evaluators
- Ongoing training for and from TAP trainers
- Educator Effectiveness Trainings

School Review and other evaluation services include:
- Annual data collection at the school level — e.g., principal and teacher surveys, student achievement gains, teacher evaluation data management systems and reports on TAP outcomes
- An on-site School Review to assess school compliance with the TAP model
- Data access to qualified and funded researchers who conduct independent evaluations
What is the TAP School Review?

The primary means of monitoring the TAP system is through the annual TAP School Review. School Reviews utilize remote and on-site implementation data and are designed to evaluate how fully and effectively each school is implementing the TAP elements.

There are two outcomes of these reviews:
› To provide feedback at the site level regarding how fully and effectively TAP is being implemented
› To provide data measuring the quality and extent of TAP implementation

How is TAP Funded?

The sponsoring agency provides funding and support. TAP is estimated to cost approximately $400 per student annually. This amount varies based on existing structures at the school site.

Funds are needed to:
› Pay salary augmentations to master and mentor teachers
› Provide performance-based compensation awards
› Hire replacements for master teachers
› Hire substitutes to free up regular teachers to attend professional development cluster groups
› Cover the costs of additional testing when necessary
› Pay teachers for extra training days

In addition, funds are needed to cover fees associated with training, ongoing technical assistance and evaluation services. Currently, TAP schools receive financial support from a variety of sources, including general revenue from state budgets, district funds and federal funds (Title I, Title II, Teacher Incentive Fund Grants, etc.). However, the best long-term funding approach should be anchored within the school district’s operational budgets through the use or reallocation of local, state and federal funds.
Section 2

Essential Steps for Implementing TAP’s Four Elements
Multiple Career Paths

OVERVIEW

TAP’s goal is to draw more talented people to the teaching profession — and keep them there — by making it more attractive and rewarding to be a teacher. In addition to learning better teaching strategies and holding them accountable for their performance, TAP teachers have access to multiple leadership paths within their career.

Through TAP, teachers can pursue a variety of positions throughout their careers — career, mentor and master teacher — depending upon their interests, abilities and accomplishments. As teachers move up the ranks, their qualifications, roles and responsibilities increase — and so does their compensation. This allows good teachers to advance professionally without having to leave the classroom. It also creates expert teacher leaders within schools to provide support to other teachers.

Master and Mentor Teachers

Master and mentor teachers are chosen through a competitive, rigorous, performance-based selection process. Master and mentor teachers must have expert curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills and the ability to work effectively with other adults. They take on additional responsibilities and authority, and are required to have a longer work year. Master and mentor teachers are held to a different performance standard than the career teachers in their school and are compensated accordingly.

Along with the principal, master and mentor teachers are part of the school’s TAP Leadership Team and are responsible for setting specific annual student learning goals. They oversee all TAP activities aimed at meeting these goals including extensive group and individual coaching and support. Masters and mentors, along with the principal, also conduct teacher evaluations that are tied to teacher performance awards. TAP provides training and certification services to prepare principals, masters and mentors to conduct professional growth activities and teacher evaluations effectively.
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Steps to Reconfigure Staff

› Based on the recommended 1:15 ratio of master teacher to career teachers,* identify the number of master teachers needed for your school. Please note that high schools may have ratios that are higher than what is recommended.
› Based on the 1:8 ratio of mentor teacher to career teachers,* identify the number of mentor teachers needed for your school. Please note that high schools may have ratios that are higher than what is recommended.
› Based on the proposed quantity of newly hired master/mentor teachers, identify the number of replacement teachers needed.
› Adopt master/mentor TAP job descriptions (see examples provided in “Sample Job Postings” pages 37-38).

*NOTE: These recommendations are based on data from examining over 300 schools and their ratios. The results of this study indicate that the ratio of master to career teachers is flexible within a limit (i.e., master 1:25, mentor 1:10 for experienced TAP schools; however, the maximum benefits were found at the recommended rate).

Steps to Ensure an Open and Competitive Selection Process for Master and Mentor Teachers

Hiring Procedures

› Establish a staffing committee (may include the TAP coordinator and/or NIET/TAP program specialist) to review applications, conduct the selection process and make recommendations for filling each position.
› Inform the faculty of open positions for master and mentor teachers and the qualifications required for selection.
› Actively seek candidates for master and mentor positions within the school and district and across the state. All positions must be competitively hired. (If an appropriate candidate is not found, then the school must wait to implement TAP until such a person becomes available.)
› Require each candidate to submit a portfolio.
› Require each candidate to submit proof of student learning gains attributable to the candidate’s instruction.
› Use TAP/district qualifications to evaluate master and mentor candidates.
› Conduct personal interviews with candidates by multiple interviewers.
› Observe classroom performance or require an instructional demonstration by candidates using the TAP Rubrics.
› Hire master and mentor teachers.

Establish Structures to Ensure that Master and Mentor Teachers Are Able to Fulfill Their TAP Job Responsibilities

› Determine if master teachers are full- or half-time.
› Establish a way to provide 1-2 hours of pupil-free time a week (not cluster time) for mentors to fulfill their responsibilities.
› Specify the number of additional contract days for master teachers (at least 10-20 days is recommended).
› Specify the number of additional contract days for mentor teachers (at least 5-10 days is recommended).
› Assign each master and mentor teacher to a cluster group of career teachers.
› Assign mentors to specific career teachers.
› Hire additional teachers or reassign teachers to provide cluster group time.
› Have master and mentor teachers sign a contract.
Basic Role and Responsibilities: PRINCIPAL

Overview of TAP Principal Position

The principal in a TAP school must be a strong instructional leader and an expert administrator, and serve to create a vision of increased student achievement through the utilization of TAP. In order to do so, a TAP principal must be at least “proficient” in the following skills: developing an exemplary school instructional/academic improvement plan, communicating student progress, and exhibiting instructional leadership with knowledge of both high-quality instructional practices and of curriculum. He or she must also be knowledgeable about TAP processes and be able to utilize them to advance student achievement. In addition, the principal:

› Serves as the head of the school leadership team, and in that capacity guides the team in analyzing student data, developing a school academic plan, monitoring cluster group operations and fostering inter-rater reliability
› In collaboration with the leadership team, creates a school assessment plan that includes formalized benchmarking and fosters teachers’ use of ongoing formative assessments
› Evaluates each teacher at least once a year by using the TAP Rubrics
› Monitors the teacher evaluation data management system to identify trends in teacher evaluation scores and maintain inter-rater reliability
› Works in a collaborative and cooperative relationship with the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist to enhance the school’s implementation
› Effectively communicates student progress to all appropriate constituencies
› Fosters relationships with community agencies and parents in support of TAP
› Identifies needs in teacher professional development and school curriculum, and gathers resources and solutions to address these needs
› Engages state and federal representatives about securing sustainable funding for TAP

Principal Leadership Standards

If outstanding teachers are the single most important school-related factor for student success, then outstanding leadership is an essential supporting element for teacher success. Even though the TAP leadership team is comprised of the principal, master and mentor teachers, it is the principal who retains control of the school and ultimately leads the TAP effort. Supporting and enhancing exemplary principal leadership is essential.

Instituting TAP is challenging. TAP schools are expected to implement research-based concepts and structures that are often new and/or have previously been underemphasized. Indeed, these changes frequently push faculties to challenge outdated yet comfortable notions of teaching and learning. As a result, feelings of discomfort and/or resistance can arise. In these times, the principal must move staff forward and communicate the vision of TAP to the school’s various constituencies.

To do this, TAP principals should have expertise in the four Principal Leadership Standards:

› Developing an exemplary school plan
› Effectively communicating student progress
› Knowledge of high-quality instructional practices
› Knowledge of curriculum
Principal Leadership Standard 1: Developing an Exemplary School Plan

Overview of Skills

The principal must be able to build an exemplary school plan that includes specific data-driven student achievement goals, curricular/instructional interventions and quarterly updates on progress.

To implement TAP effectively, a school must have an instructional/academic improvement plan that:

› Includes goals and interventions that are clear to all concerned constituents
› Is aligned to the school’s vision and mission
› Has an assessment framework that provides regular updates on student progress

By organizing the school community around a common vision and providing direction for improvement efforts, the school plan creates the framework for the successful improvement of teaching and learning. It also clearly illuminates the need for establishing ongoing assessments that measure student progress.

While building a school plan is a collaborative effort, the principal leads this venture and must have expertise in the critical attributes of building such a plan. These attributes include the ability to display the school plan so that it is easily understandable, identify and utilize meaningful measures of progress (teacher formative assessments, benchmarks and state-aligned high-stakes tests) and effectively analyze student data and identify corresponding instructional interventions required to address student needs.

Principal Leadership Standard 2: Effectively Communicating Student Progress

Overview of Skills

A communication plan should be developed that regularly updates the community on student progress, exemplary performances and successful practices.

The principal must be effective at communicating student assessment data to guide and focus staff, students and parents on student progress.

The school plan organizes thinking, planning and decision-making. To activate the school plan so that it is a dynamic, living document, a plan for regularly reporting student progress must be in place and utilized. In this way, Standard 2 is similar to developing a marketing plan, promoting student progress as the focus. When this information is effectively communicated, the entire school community mobilizes itself toward the common goal of achieving measurable student progress.

To be successful, these campaigns take a great deal of planning by the principal and TAP leadership team. Moreover, in some schools, resources like technology and time are limited, making the process more difficult. The principal must identify and optimize available resources.

Essential Components of a Communication Plan Include:

› Regular monitoring and communication of student progress to teachers through staff and cluster meetings
› Regular reporting to parents regarding student progress
› School-wide displays of student progress
› Regular celebrations of significant gains (and other achievements)

When Possible, Implementation Measures Should also Include:

› Technology to communicate progress and exemplary models
› The ongoing production of artifacts celebrating significant gains
› School, classroom, student and teacher awards and recognitions
Basic Role and Responsibilities: PRINCIPAL

**Principal Leadership Standard 3: Knowledge of High-Quality Instructional Practices**

**Overview of Skills**

› Develop exemplary models of instructional strategies that lead to increased student achievement and can be used easily when assisting teachers  
› Conduct teacher observations and post-observation conferences that lead to increased instructional proficiency by teachers

The principal is able to identify, promote, teach and describe high-quality instructional practices.

**Principal Leadership Standard 4: Knowledge of Curriculum**

**Overview of Skills**

› Fully understand the scope of skills, knowledge and content that the curriculum provides  
› Know the state standards and how the curriculum addresses those standards  
› Oversee the articulation of the curriculum across grade levels and student sub-groups  
› Know each teacher’s level of proficiency in teaching the current curriculum

Since TAP processes provide a powerful system for rapidly disseminating instructional strategies and curriculum, the quality and consistency of curriculum implementation must be regularly monitored on a school-wide basis. Consequently, the principal’s leadership in this area is an essential safeguard for assuring that only the most effective and appropriate curricular interventions are being selected for implementation.
Basic Job Responsibilities: MASTER TEACHER

Leadership Team Participation
Some of the responsibilities a master teacher has as a member of this team are to analyze student data to identify student learning goals; develop a school academic achievement plan; create a school assessment plan; monitor goal-setting, activities, classroom follow-up and goal attainment for cluster groups; assess teacher evaluation results; and maintain inter-rater reliability.

Research/Field-Testing
Master teachers are responsible for identifying research-based strategies that will enhance student achievement in the area of student need as revealed by the analysis of data. Selected strategies are field-tested to determine their impact on student achievement. The field-test process includes: making necessary modifications, determining appropriate sequencing/segmenting and identifying necessary critical attributes to ensure their effective transfer from cluster to classrooms.

Cluster Group Planning and Implementation
As a cluster group leader, the master teacher is responsible for: developing the long-range cluster plan, weekly cluster group meeting records, and activities with other members of the leadership team; overseeing and leading, co-leading or attending selected cluster meetings weekly following the STEPS for Effective Learning; providing appropriate follow-up in the classroom; and assessing all cluster groups’ progress toward goals.

Individual Growth Plans
The master teacher oversees groups of teachers in developing goals, provides instructional interventions with proven results, facilitates teacher proficiency with these new strategies through classroom-based follow-up, and ensures that the progression of teacher skill development is aligned with changing student learning needs.

Evaluations/Conferencing
The master teacher conducts classroom evaluations and conferencing for both announced and unannounced observations.

Classroom Follow-Up
The master teacher provides support following every cluster meeting (e.g., observation/feedback, model teaching, demonstration lessons and team teaching following every cluster meeting and in individual teacher mentoring situations).

Qualifications
Master teachers are required to have substantially more experience in curriculum development, professional development and mentoring than traditional teachers. They must represent the “gold standard” in teaching and serve as a role model to all other instructional staff. Master teachers should have at least five years’ experience and a proven track record in increasing student achievement. Master teachers must have contributed to their profession through activities such as conducting research, publishing articles or other work in reputable education journals, teaching at the higher education level, presenting at conferences, and receiving awards that recognize their educational talents. Finally, master teachers need to be excellent communicators with students and adults alike.
Basic Job Responsibilities: MASTER TEACHER

Recommended Qualifications

- Master’s degree in relevant academic discipline
- Doctorate degree in relevant academic discipline desired
- At least five years of successful teaching as measured by performance evaluations, promotions and portfolio of work
- For teachers currently in TAP schools, exemplary evaluation scores on the TAP Rubrics
- Demonstrated expertise in content, curriculum development, student learning, data analysis, mentoring and professional development, as demonstrated by an advanced degree, advanced training and/or career experience
- Student data that illustrates the teacher’s ability to increase student achievement through utilizing specific instructional interventions
- Instructional expertise demonstrated through model teaching, team-teaching, video presentations and student achievement gains
- Classroom demonstrations and external observations
- Proof of contribution to profession such as research, publications, university teaching, presentations and awards
- Excellent communication skills and an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults

Overview of Master Teacher Position

Master teachers function in a unique manner relative to the traditional teacher. Their primary role is, with the principal, to analyze student data and create and institute an academic achievement plan for the school. Master teachers lead cluster groups and provide demonstration lessons, coaching and team teaching to career teachers. They also spend, on average, two hours per day teaching students. Master teachers collaborate to determine and to develop the adoption of learning resources. They are partners with the principal in evaluating other teachers. Master teachers may also partner with the principal in sharing some of the responsibility of interacting with parents.

Role and Responsibilities

- Analyze school-wide student data as the basis for developing a school plan
- Develop the school plan utilizing the TAP processes
- Oversee the planning, facilitation and follow-up of cluster group meetings
- Team-teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons and develop and help implement curriculum
- Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers’ goals
- Research and field-test, within the school, appropriate strategies that target the identified area of student need
- Evaluate teacher performance by using the TAP Rubrics and conduct follow-up teacher conferences
- Participate in all TAP trainings and become a Certified TAP Evaluator
- Attend professional development meetings
- Work an expanded calendar year

Evaluation

The principal, district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist and other master teachers evaluate master teachers through announced and unannounced observations on an ongoing basis. As well, mentor and career teachers participate in master teacher evaluations by completing the responsibilities survey at the end of every school year. (See page 3 of the TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide.)
**Basic Job Responsibilities: MENTOR TEACHER**

**Leadership Team Participation**
The TAP Leadership Team (TLT) is responsible for the overall implementation of TAP. Some of the responsibilities a mentor teacher has as a member of this team are to analyze student data to identify professional needs; develop an academic achievement plan; create a school evaluation plan; monitor goal-setting, activities, classroom follow-up and goal attainment for cluster groups; assess teacher evaluation results; and maintain inter-rater reliability.

**Research/Field-Testing**
Mentor teachers provide support and assistance to the master teacher in researching and field-testing within the school.

**Cluster Group Planning and Implementation**
With cooperation and oversight from the master teacher, the mentor teacher develops the long-range cluster plan and weekly cluster group agendas and activities, following the *STEPS for Effective Learning*. He or she leads or co-leads weekly cluster meetings and maintains the cluster group record. As schedules and roles specify, he or she also provides appropriate classroom follow-up.

**Individual Growth Plans**
With oversight from the master teacher, the mentor teacher facilitates teachers in developing their goals and acquiring instructional interventions with proven results. He or she is also responsible for enhancing teacher proficiency with classroom-based follow-up, and for ensuring that the progression of teacher skill development is aligned with changing student needs.

**Evaluations/Conferencing**
The mentor teacher conducts classroom evaluations and conferences for both announced and unannounced observations.

**Classroom Follow-Up**
The mentor teacher provides observation/feedback, model teaching (demonstration lessons) and team teaching following every cluster meeting and in individual teacher mentoring situations.

**Qualifications**
Mentor teachers play an essential role in TAP. In addition to helping create the academic achievement plan for the school, their role involves serving as a liaison between the master and career teachers to ensure that all teachers are receiving the support necessary to improve their instruction and increase student achievement. By including mentors who are provided release time, the TAP model ensures that all teachers have the opportunity to be mentored.
Basic Job Responsibilities: MENTOR TEACHER

Recommended Qualifications

› Bachelor’s degree and full credentials OR alternative certification, including a passing level on elementary subject matter assessments and professional knowledge assessments
› A portfolio and classroom demonstrations showing instructional excellence
› Student data that illustrates the teacher’s ability to increase student achievement through utilizing specific instructional strategies
› Minimum of two years’ teaching experience
› Recommended by the principal, district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist and master and mentor teachers
› Excellent instructor and communicator with an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults

Overview of Mentor Teacher Position

Mentor teachers are actively involved in enhancing/supporting the teaching experience of career teachers. Through the leadership team, they participate in analyzing student data and creating the academic achievement plan. With oversight and support from the master teacher, they co-lead cluster meetings and, as a result, also provide classroom-based follow-up and extensive feedback on the instructional practices of career teachers. Planning for instruction is done in partnership with other mentor teachers and career teachers, with the input and guidance of the master teacher. Mentor teachers are required to engage in professional development activities that are both self- and team-directed.

Role and Responsibilities

› Through an analysis of student data, assist in the creation of the school academic achievement plan
› With the oversight of the master teacher, plan and facilitate group meetings and provide appropriate follow-up
› Team-teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons and develop and help implement curriculum
› Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers’ goals
› Support the master teacher in researching and field-testing, within the school, appropriate strategies that target the identified area of student need
› Evaluate teacher performance by using the TAP Rubrics
› Participate in all TAP trainings and become a Certified TAP Evaluator.
› Work an expanded calendar year

Evaluation

The principal, district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist, master teachers and other mentor teachers evaluate mentor teachers through announced and unannounced observations on an ongoing basis. As well, master and career teachers participate in mentor teacher evaluations by completing the responsibilities survey at the end of every school year.
(See page 3, TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide.)
Basic Job Responsibilities: CAREER TEACHER

Qualifications
The career teacher is most similar to what we now think of as a traditional classroom teacher. Candidates are expected to have a bachelor’s degree with at least a provisional teaching certificate in their specialty area. However, TAP also supports the hiring of talented candidates who have a bachelor’s degree and successful completion of an alternative certification program.

Overview of Career Teacher Position
The primary difference between the role of the career teacher in the TAP model and the role of the traditional teacher is that the career teacher routinely teams with more experienced master and mentor teachers. This collaborative-teaching environment provides necessary support to the career teacher. This collaboration also builds an induction program into the staffing system. As a result, the new teacher will not experience the feelings of isolation and frustration that many new teachers experience. The career teacher also collaborates on lesson planning and develops expertise in all areas of instruction by working directly with mentor and master teachers.

Role and Responsibilities
› Attend cluster group meetings
  • Meetings should occur at least once a week for one hour. During these meetings, career teachers are expected to attend and be prepared to participate in all aspects of the meeting.
› Collaborate in the classroom with master and mentor teachers
  • In conjunction with cluster groups, career teachers are paired with a master and a mentor teacher who, in each teacher’s own classroom, provide instructional support to increase teacher expertise and, hence, student achievement. This team-teaching environment allows the master/mentor teacher to observe the career teacher regularly.
  • Variations of this one-to-one pairing may occur, depending upon financial viability and the number of qualified teachers at a school site.
› Participate in TAP’s Instructionally Focused Accountability System
  • All teachers in TAP schools are evaluated three to four times during the year by multiple evaluators using the TAP Rubrics as the measurement tool.
› With assistance from the master/mentor teachers, career teachers develop expertise through creating and maintaining an Individual Growth Plan
  • In alignment with the teacher’s refinement area (as identified during the TAP evaluation process) and his or her students’ academic needs, the teacher is asked, with ongoing support from the master/mentor teachers, to develop and maintain an Individual Growth Plan.
› Career teachers work a traditional calendar year

Evaluation
The principal, master and mentor teachers evaluate career teachers through announced and unannounced observations on an ongoing basis. (See page 3, TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide.)
Ongoing Applied Professional Growth

Overview

Unlike the traditional model of professional development that is common in most schools, TAP provides teachers with a system of professional development that is ongoing, job-embedded, collaborative, student-centered and led by expert instructors. TAP restructures the school schedule to provide time during the regular school day for teachers to meet, learn, plan, mentor and share with other teachers. This common time allows teachers to constantly improve the quality of their instruction and hence, increase their students' academic achievement. Further, teachers learn new instructional strategies and have greater opportunities to collaborate, both of which enable them to become more effective teachers.

Ongoing Applied Professional Growth in TAP schools focuses on identified needs based on instructional issues that specific teachers face with specific students. Teachers use data to target these areas of need, instead of trying to implement the latest fad in professional development.

TAP professional growth includes cluster groups, individual coaching and classroom-based support.

Cluster groups meet for one to two hours weekly during contract time in grade-alike or subject-alike groups. Clusters are led by expert instructors in the school — the master and/or mentor teachers — and their activities are focused on instructional practices as determined by student needs.

Further, the TAP career path establishes a structure where master and mentor teachers provide ongoing classroom-based support. This includes team teaching, conducting classroom demonstration lessons, coaching, giving regular feedback on specific teaching and learning innovations and conducting evaluations and post-conferences.
Ongoing Applied Professional Growth

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Steps to Implement and Support Teacher Leadership and Collaboration of Teacher Activities

Cluster Groups

› Reconfigure the school schedule and determine the day(s) and time, frequency and duration for each cluster group meeting.
  • Clusters must meet at least one hour per week during contract time.
  • All master, mentor and career teachers assigned to the same cluster group have classroom release time together.
› Establish cluster groups (grade-alike or subject-alike) — assign each master teacher to a specific group of career and mentor teachers.
› Identify and arrange for high-quality, academically rigorous activities that students will participate in when regular classroom teachers are engaged in cluster group activities.

Steps to Implement the Distributed Leadership Model

TAP Leadership Team (TLT)

› Establish a regular meeting schedule for the TLT (administrators, master and mentor teachers). It is strongly recommended that these occur weekly.
› Establish TLT’s scope of authority and work responsibilities to include the following:
  • Analyze student achievement data and set school-wide and cluster groups’ student achievement goals.
  • Review cluster groups’ and teachers’ Individual Growth Plan, activities and outcomes to ensure that both sets of goals are aligned with school goals. Ensure that clusters are properly implementing the STEPS for Effective Learning.
  • Following TAP training, continuously focus on deepening understanding of TAP’s Instructionally Focused Accountability System (Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards and TAP Rubrics) to ensure that team members’ observations and conferencing skills are expert.
  • Conduct instructionally focused observations and conferences with all teachers and determine each teacher’s score.
  • Ensure that the team maintains a high level of inter-rater reliability and that score inflation does not occur when documenting teacher skills and knowledge.

Training the TAP Leadership Team

› Schedule dates for the principal, master and mentor teachers to participate in trainings:
  • TAP CORE: “Overview and Evaluation” (3 days)—scheduled prior to opening a TAP school
  • TAP CORE: Leadership Team (2 days)—scheduled prior to opening a TAP school
  • TAP CORE: Cluster (2 days)—at the beginning of the first year of TAP implementation (initial certification with recertification required annually)
  • TAP CORE: Field Testing (1 day)—during the first year of TAP implementation
› Master teachers attend all meetings facilitated by the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist.
› Attend the annual TAP National Conference and TAP Summer Institute (when possible).
› Subscribe to and use the TAP System Training Portal.
Instructionally Focused Accountability

Overview

TAP™ provides a comprehensive system for evaluating teachers that rewards them for how well they teach their students. Teachers are held accountable for meeting the TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards, research-based standards based on twenty-six indicators and operationalized against a five-point scale rubric. Teachers are also responsible for the academic growth of their students.

Each teacher is evaluated three to four times a year, during announced and unannounced observations by multiple, trained and certified evaluators using the TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards. Prior to announced evaluations, evaluators meet with teachers for a pre-conference to discuss the upcoming evaluation. All evaluations are followed up with a post-conference session between the observed teacher and the evaluator to discuss reinforcements and refinements intended to help the teacher strengthen his/her instructional practice.

Every teacher is also evaluated individually based on how much learning growth the students in his or her classroom have achieved during the school year. Further, all teachers in the school are evaluated collectively based on the learning growth of all students in the school. Through this structure, TAP makes it possible to consider multiple measures of teacher effectiveness.

TAP also provides ongoing training, mentoring and classroom support during the school day to help teachers meet these accountability standards, as well as providing financial incentives for success.
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Steps to Establish TAP’s Instructionally Focused Accountability System

› Schedule one or two days prior to the opening of school for faculty participation in the TAP Startup of School Workshops:
  • Year One — general TAP elements and preparation for participating in the cluster group professional growth activities
  • Year Two — review of TAP elements and the Instructionally Focused Accountability System

› The first cluster cycle in the first year of TAP implementation should be devoted to developing understanding of the TAP Rubrics (Instruction, Designing and Planning Instruction and The Learning Environment), as well as the Teacher Responsibilities Surveys.

› During the first year of implementation, at least one Leadership Team Meeting a month should be used to review the Instructionally Focused Accountability System, including rubrics and practice videos for observation and conferencing skills.

› A school committee, under the leadership of the principal, studies policies and procedures in the TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide to prepare for training all school faculty.

› The staff committee disseminates to the whole staff — in faculty meetings, by written communication, at cluster group meetings and by individual communications — the important details of the TAP Instructionally Focused Accountability System. These must include the following elements:
  • TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards
    1. Teaching Skills and Knowledge: TAP Rubrics
      » Instruction
      » Designing and Planning Instruction
      » The Learning Environment
    2. Teacher Responsibilities
       • Criteria for student achievement gains attributable to the teacher and the whole school
       • Policies governing the Instructionally Focused Accountability System

› The superintendent secures approval from the school board to use the TAP Instructionally Focused Accountability System to document teacher skills and knowledge for performance awards.

› Conduct three to four official evaluations per teacher each year.

› Train the appropriate leadership team members on how to use teacher evaluation data management systems to help maintain inter-rater reliability and identify trends in teacher evaluation results.

Steps to Certify Members of the TAP Leadership Team as TAP Evaluators

› The principal, master teachers, mentor teachers and district personnel participate in the specified trainings.

› Establish a date for the certification test completion.

› After the first certification test, subsequent years can be done online by using the TAP System Training Portal.
Performance-Based Compensation

OVERVIEW
The Performance-Based Component of TAP creates a differentiated compensation model for the school which can utilize several approaches. The two options below can be combined or used independently depending on available funding and the preference of school administrators.

Performance Award System
One form of differentiated compensation is a performance-based compensation system in which all educators in the building (administrators; master, mentor, and career teachers) can earn additional compensation through a school-wide performance-based compensation system based on their performance in the classroom, their students’ achievement gains and the entire school’s achievement growth. Section 3 of the TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide provides detail for NIET’s recommendation for calculating and distributing performance-based compensation awards in the most equitable manner.

Salary Augmentation Related to Career Path
Another form of differentiated compensation is the salary augmentation provided to teacher leaders (i.e. mentor and master teachers). Teacher leaders earn additional stipends for their skills, knowledge and responsibility in leading the professional development initiative within the school. Administrators also can receive an augmentation based on district decisions.
Performance-Based Compensation

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING A SALARY AUGMENTATION SYSTEM

Steps to Implement TAP’s Performance-Based Compensation System
› Establish salary augmentations for master and mentor teachers; and/or
› Establish a performance-based compensation award pool for teacher performance awards.

Steps to Ensure that the Student Growth Calculations Required for Performance-Based Awards Can Be Made
› Establish a testing program for all students in applicable grade levels with annual testing. The test must be scaled and vertically aligned, or capable of being equated.
› Prepare to annually collect and electronically transmit student testing data matched to the teacher for value-added calculations. (This data collection should begin immediately in order to prepare for later value-added calculations.)
› Sign a contract with a vendor to conduct individual teachers’ and school-wide value-added calculations.
› The principal and/or designee attend TAP trainings on:
   • value-added concepts
   • the data collection process
   • the compensation spreadsheet or data management system

Awarding Performance-Based Awards (First-Year or Second-Year Options)
› Use the TAP Compensation Spreadsheet or data management system to calculate performance awards.
› Recommended performance-based award allocation:
   • 50 percent: TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards (SKR)
   • 30 percent: individual classroom achievement growth
   • 20 percent: school-wide achievement growth

Note: Teachers who do not have individual classroom achievement growth are recommended to be paid 50 percent SKR and 50 percent school-wide achievement growth.

NIET Grant Recipients
› Based on the requirements in the regulations of grants, specific NIET TAP projects may be required to modify aspects of the Performance-Based Compensation System in order to meet those federal requirements.
Section 3

TAP Planning and Preparation
Planning and Preparation Steps and Activities

OVERVIEW OF TIMELINE

The following timeline includes a description of the general steps and activities that should be considered during a school’s planning period. We have attempted to put these steps and activities in chronological order, but they may vary because of local circumstances.

It is important to note that this timeline applies to schools that begin planning in the fall of one year and implement the following fall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS &amp; ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED DATE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish a Planning Committee</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The committee should include able administrators and teachers. Union representation on the committee is also advised. The planning committee works in cooperation with the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist, district personnel and NIET. If more than one school in a district plans to implement TAP, it is necessary that the schools coordinate with one another.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Workshop and Distribution of TAP Applications</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A planning workshop is held with the planning committee, the district superintendent and other district staff members, as appropriate.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAP School Site Presentations</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAP is presented to the school staff, school site council, parents, community groups and the school board.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Approval</td>
<td>Fall / Early Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools/districts must solicit approval for the TAP system from a consensus of faculty.</td>
<td>Fall / Early Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Worksheet</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a plan to include:</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Scheduling for all TAP-related meetings</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› A staffing reconfiguration and hiring plan</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› Cluster groups</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>› A budget worksheet</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Worksheet Review</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans may be submitted for NIET reviews and to provide feedback as desired.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a Master and Mentor Selection Committee</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The committee may be a subcommittee of the TAP planning committee. Membership must include the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist, as applicable.</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Presentation: Multiple Career Paths</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each TAP school conducts a staff meeting to review TAP’s Multiple Career Path opportunities. The mentor and master teacher roles, responsibilities and qualifications, along with the interview and selection process, are reviewed.</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Board Presentation: Instructionally Focused Accountability System</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal/superintendent presents the TAP Instructionally Focused Accountability System to the school board for approval to implement TAP fully the next school year.</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Planning and Preparation Steps and Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS &amp; ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Testing Administration Window</strong></td>
<td>As Mandated by State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each school administers the student-testing program during this window of time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Posting of Mentor/Master Positions</strong></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All master and mentor teaching positions are posted and applications may be sent to the personnel department of the Department of Education. Marketing and advertising positions beyond the district are required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor/Master Applications Due</strong></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All applications for mentor and master teaching positions in TAP schools, along with required accompanying materials, are due.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application Review and Interviews</strong></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor and master teacher applications are reviewed by the master and mentor selection committee and district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist. A pool of qualified candidates is developed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview and Selection of Master and Mentor Teachers</strong></td>
<td>Late Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee members interview and select these teachers from the pool of qualified candidates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contract Addendum Signed</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master and mentor teachers sign addendums to their contract outlining the responsibilities, job descriptions and compensation for the role designated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value-Added Calculations</strong></td>
<td>Late Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each TAP school makes formal arrangements to have school-level and classroom-level value-added calculations done to support the TAP Performance-Based Compensation System.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each TAP school/district signs a Memorandum of Understanding with NIET and other parties (Department of Education, funders, etc.), as applicable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Meeting: Leadership Team</strong></td>
<td>Before End of School Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to the close of the school year (planning year), the TAP Leadership Team (TLT) meets with the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist or a NIET representative to review:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› The role of the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist (as applicable)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>› Cluster group assignments and schedule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› Roles and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› TLT meeting expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› Preparations for the Startup of School Workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› A budget worksheet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE Training for TAP Leadership Team</strong></td>
<td>Late Spring or Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The entire TAP Leadership Team (administrators, masters and mentors) attends initial CORE Training.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Planning and Preparation Steps and Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Sample Job Descriptions:</strong> requirements and responsibilities for your master and mentor teacher positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Interview Questions:</strong> you plan to ask master and mentor teacher candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Master School Schedule:</strong> include leadership team meetings and cluster meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>School Faculty Roster:</strong> by grade and subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Organizational Chart:</strong> show each cluster group and the master, mentor and career teachers who participate in the clusters (including full names, grade and subject(s) taught)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Cluster Group Meeting Schedules:</strong> times, places, days of the week, members’ names with titles and subject(s) taught (used to schedule site visits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Leadership Team Meeting Schedule:</strong> times, places, days of the week, members’ names with titles and subject(s) taught (used to schedule site visits)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8.   | **Master/Mentor Weekly Release Time:**  
  - Master teacher release time is available for demonstration or model lessons, evaluation, observation of teachers, team teaching and planning cluster meetings  
  - Mentor teacher release time is available for coaching mentees or evaluation and observations |
| 9.   | **A Sample Contract Addendum:** master and mentor teachers sign outlining their job responsibilities, additional contract day(s) and salary augmentations |
| 10.  | **A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** all parties sign and approved by the school board and superintendent for the performance-based pay accountability system (as applicable) |
| 11.  | **Evaluation Schedule:** develop a schedule for practice and for the formal evaluation process, when implemented (see example on the next page) |
Planning and Preparation Steps and Activities

**EXAMPLE EVALUATION SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER'S NAME</th>
<th>EVALUATOR/DATE</th>
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</table>
### Planning and Preparation Steps and Activities:
#### STARTING YOUR TAP SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS &amp; ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAP CORE Training</strong></td>
<td>Prior to Start of School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators and master and mentor teachers from all TAP schools attend the eight days of TAP CORE training: Evaluation, Cluster and Leadership.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Team Meeting to Set School Cluster Plan</strong></td>
<td>Prior to Start of School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership team analyzes student test results to develop a school cluster plan. Each teacher’s students’ scores are provided to master teachers for distribution and setting goals.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAP CORE Training</strong></td>
<td>After the Start of School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master and mentor teachers participate in a one-day training, CORE: Field Testing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAP Startup of School Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Faculty Opening Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each TAP school conducts the one-day TAP Startup of School Workshop. The leadership team facilitates this workshop.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each TAP school formally presents the following:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>› School goals aligned to cluster group goals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>› Cluster group assignment and schedules</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>› Review of operations/guidelines for cluster groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Review of Reflective Journals</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Review of Instructionally Focused Accountability and Performance-Based Compensation Systems</td>
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</table>
Appendix A

TAP Planning Worksheets
**School Profile Worksheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name:</th>
<th>Today's Date:</th>
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</table>

### Superintendent Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr.</th>
<th>Mrs.</th>
<th>Ms.</th>
<th>Dr.</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<th>Email:</th>
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<th>City:</th>
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<th>ZIP:</th>
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### School Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr.</th>
<th>Mrs.</th>
<th>Ms.</th>
<th>Dr.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Principal Name:</th>
<th>Years at School:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email:</th>
<th>Total Years as Principal at Any School:</th>
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<tr>
<th>School Address:</th>
<th>District:</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>City:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>ZIP:</th>
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<tr>
<th>School Phone:</th>
<th>School Fax:</th>
<th>School Website:</th>
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### Grade Levels Served (check all that apply)

- [ ] 1
- [ ] 2
- [ ] 3
- [ ] 4
- [ ] 5
- [ ] 6
- [ ] 7
- [ ] 8
- [ ] 9
- [ ] 10
- [ ] 11
- [ ] 12

Please use numbers from the fall of 20___ for the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AYP Status:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

- [ ] Title I School
- [ ] School-Wide Program
- [ ] Targeted Assistance

**Check appropriate description:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students:</th>
<th>Number of Non-Certified Instructional Staff (e.g., teacher aides):</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Administrators:</th>
<th>Number of Classroom Teachers (grade level and core) (FTE):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Number of Certified Staff** (administrators, media, counselors, teachers, etc.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Students:</th>
<th>Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: _____%</th>
<th>Receiving ESL Services: _____%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

What percentage/number of teachers in your school voted to implement TAP? _____%

What was the means of obtaining this result (i.e., secret ballot, open vote, petition)? _____%
Assessment/Performance Summary

Please provide a short summary of your current performance on state assessments or state accountability indicators. (Please reference percentage Advanced/Proficient or AYP status as necessary. Note: It is not necessary to enclose additional testing documents.)
Multiple Career Paths

Recruitment and Hiring of Mentor and Master Teachers

1. Please describe below your school’s plan to implement a competitive selection process for hiring mentor and master teachers. Make sure the following questions are addressed:

   › How will you inform your faculty of open positions?

   › How will you recruit candidates from beyond the school and district?

2. Attach sample job descriptions, requirements and responsibilities for your master and mentor teacher positions (see examples provided in “Sample Job Postings”).

3. List the names and positions of the Interview/Selection Committee below (including district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist):

   **Interview / Selection Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Multiple Career Paths

4. Attach a separate page with questions you plan to ask when interviewing candidates for master and mentor teacher positions (see examples provided in “Sample Interview Questions”).

5. Attach a timeline for hiring master and mentor teachers.

6. Attach a sample of the contract addendum master and mentor teachers will sign outlining their job responsibilities, additional contract days and salary addendums (see examples provided in “Sample Contract Addendum”).

7. In the space below, please provide a list of the requirements for master and mentor teacher candidates. If you need additional space, please attach the requirements to the application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master and Mentor Teacher Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASTER REQUIREMENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiple Career Paths

**Structural Support for Master Teachers**
1. Number of full-time master teachers: ______
2. Number of part-time master teachers: ______ (responsibilities are solely master/teacher—related)
   › Percentage of time as master: ______
3. Ratio of master teachers to career teachers: ______ (recommended ratio is 1 master for 15 career teachers)
4. Salary addendum for master teachers: ______ (as if full-time)
5. Number of cluster groups each master teacher will oversee: ______
6. Number of additional contract days for master teachers: ______ (suggested number is at least 10-20 days)

**Structural Support for Mentor Teachers**
1. Number of mentor teachers: ______
2. Ratio of mentor teachers to career teachers: ______ (recommended ratio is 1 mentor for 8 career teachers)
3. Salary addendum for mentor teachers: ______
4. Number of additional contract days for mentor teachers: ______ (suggested amount is at least 5-10 days)
5. Number of minutes of release time for mentor teachers—weekly/monthly: ______
   (recommended release time is 1-2 hours per week)
6. Number of cluster groups each mentor teacher will lead: ______

**Structural Support for Replacement/Specialist Teachers**
1. Number of additional teachers hired to cover master teachers’ classrooms: ______
2. Number of full-time certified replacement teachers: ______
3. Number of part-time certified replacement teachers: ______
4. Number of additional certified teachers hired to provide for cluster group release time: ______

**Leadership Team**
1. How often will your leadership team meet? ______ (at least once per week is strongly recommended)
2. How much time will you schedule for your leadership team meeting? ______
3. Explain the scope of authority and work responsibilities of your leadership team:
Sample Interview Questions: MASTER/MENTOR POSITIONS

These questions were developed based on the TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards. They are designed for use in interview sessions, both to hire mentor and master teachers and to advance teachers to mentor or master status.

Designing and Planning Instruction

› How do you decide what is important to teach?
› Explain how you align your teaching goals with school goals and content standards.
› How does your teaching and the content you teach reflect the knowledge and perspectives of your students?
› Talk about a number of students with whom your instructional approach is different.
› What do you do to ensure that your curricular materials are developmentally appropriate?
› How do you extend your knowledge of instructional resources and materials?
› Describe some of the new technologies you integrated into your teaching this year.
› What do you do in your teaching to foster real-world experiences for your students?
› How have you improved your content knowledge?

The Learning Environment

› What happens in your classroom when students disagree with you or have a difference of opinion about a particular instruction?
› How do you encourage your students to expand their thinking and take risks?
› Tell us about the ways student input and choices are incorporated into the dynamics of the class.
› How do you communicate and apply standards for student behavior throughout the course of the year?
› Describe your expectations for student performance.
Sample Interview Questions: MASTER/MENTOR POSITIONS

**Instruction**

› Give an example of an exercise that you have found successful for engaging students in discussion.
› How do you vary your instruction to accommodate different students’ learning styles?
› Give an example of how student interest changed the direction of your teaching.
› Do students in your class assess each other’s work?
› What were some interesting ways you assessed students this year?
› What project(s) or learning experiences did you implement that students found particularly meaningful?
› How does your teaching afford students opportunities to develop their own individual interests?
› What things do you look for as evidence of student performance?
› Discuss some ways that you provide feedback to students throughout their learning.
› How do you integrate thinking and problem-solving skills into your teaching?
› Describe some problem-solving activities you have developed.
› How do you know when you have succeeded with a student?
› How do you share the expectations you have for students?

**Responsibilities**

› In what ways have you collaborated with your colleagues to improve your teaching?
› How have you improved the teaching performances of your mentee?
› What have you done this year to improve your school’s quality?
› What staff/team development have you led?
› Describe the ways in which you have team-taught or team-planned.
› In what areas have you reflected on your teaching? How has this helped you improve?
› What suggestions have you given parents to help them educate their children at home?
› How have you reached out and communicated with parents?
Sample Job Posting: MASTER TEACHER

Master Teacher Needed!
› Are you interested in being part of a new and innovative teaching experience?
› Do you want to teach at a school where upward mobility exists?
› Are you experienced in team-teaching and collaborating with your colleagues?
› Do you have prior experience mentoring colleagues and providing peer assistance?
› Then this may be the job for you!

School Name is currently looking for a talented, energetic, motivated educator to become part of a new educational experience. Our school implements TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement developed by the Milken Family Foundation and run by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). This system offers teachers multiple career paths, compensation competitive with the market, ongoing applied professional development and performance-based accountability. We are currently launching our first year of TAP and are looking for teachers to fill the “master” teacher role.

Specific Qualifications Required
› Master’s degree in relevant academic discipline
› Doctorate degree in relevant academic discipline desired
› At least five years of successful teaching as measured by performance evaluations, promotions and portfolio of work
› For teachers currently in TAP schools, exemplary evaluation scores on the TAP Rubrics
› Demonstrated expertise in content, curriculum development, student learning, test analysis, mentoring and professional development, as demonstrated by an advanced degree, advanced training and/or career experience
› Student data that illustrates the teacher’s ability to increase student achievement through utilizing specific instructional interventions
› Instructional expertise demonstrated through model teaching, team-teaching, video presentations and student achievement gains
› Demonstrated expertise in classroom demonstrations and external observations
› Proof of contribution to profession, such as research, publications, university teaching, presentations and awards
› Excellent communication skills and an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults

Specific Role and Responsibilities
› Analyze school-wide student data as the basis for helping develop a school plan
› Develop a school plan utilizing the TAP processes
› Oversee the planning, facilitation and follow-up of cluster group meetings during Professional Growth Blocks
› Team-teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons and develop and help implement curriculum
› Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers’ Individual Growth Plan goals
› Research and field-test, within the school, appropriate strategies that target the identified area of student need
› Evaluate teacher performance by using the TAP Rubrics and conduct follow-up teacher conferences
› Participate in all TAP trainings and become a Certified TAP Evaluator
› Attend professional development meetings
› Work an expanded calendar year

Salary is extremely competitive. Opportunity for growth is based upon demonstrated teaching performance. If you are interested in participating in this exciting experience, please contact...
Sample Job Posting: MENTOR TEACHER

Mentor Teacher Needed!

› Do you want to teach at a school where upward mobility exists?
› Are you experienced in team-teaching and collaborating with your colleagues?
› Do you have prior experience mentoring colleagues and providing peer assistance?
› Then this may be the job for you!

SCHOOL NAME is currently looking for a talented, energetic, motivated educator to become a part of a new educational experience. Our school implements TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement developed by the Milken Family Foundation and run by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). This system offers teachers multiple career paths, compensation competitive with the market, ongoing applied professional development and performance-based accountability. We are currently launching our first year of TAP and are looking for teachers to fill the “mentor” teacher role.

Specific Qualifications Required

› Bachelor’s degree and full credentials OR alternative certification, including a passing level on elementary subject matter assessments and professional knowledge assessments
› A portfolio and classroom demonstrations showing instructional excellence
› Minimum of two years’ teaching experience
› For teachers currently in TAP schools, recommendation by principal, master and mentor teacher
› Excellent instructor and communicator with an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults

Specific Role and Responsibilities

› Through an analysis of student data, help create the school academic achievement plan
› With the oversight of the master teacher, plan and facilitate group meetings during Professional Growth Blocks and provide appropriate follow-up
› Team-teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons and develop and help implement curriculum
› Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers’ Individual Growth Plan goals
› Support the master teacher in researching and field-testing, within the school, appropriate strategies that target the identified area of student need
› Evaluate teacher performance by using the TAP Rubrics
› Work an expanded calendar year

Salary is extremely competitive. Opportunity for growth is based upon demonstrated teaching performance. If you are interested in participating in this exciting experience, please contact...
Sample Contract Addendum: MASTER TEACHER

This CONTRACT for SCHOOL YEAR is made and entered into between SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME, acting by and through its Governing Board and hereinafter referred to as “School District,” and MASTER TEACHER NAME, hereinafter referred to as “Employee.”

The Employee, being duly qualified, hereby agrees for a period of one year, BEGINNING DATE through ENDING DATE, to devote Employee’s attention to the following duties in addition to the regular teaching contract:

**Collaborate with colleagues to construct exemplary lessons.** Master teachers are expected to work with all teachers to develop lessons for the classroom. They guide the work of the teachers, providing them with expert advice along the way.

**Oversee the adoption of curriculum resources.** The master teacher serves as a co-instructional leader with the principal to help adopt curriculum resources to be used by all teachers.

**Provide demonstration lessons.** As part of the ongoing applied professional development activities, the master teacher conducts demonstration lessons to help teachers improve their classroom skills.

**Facilitate curriculum planning.** Master teachers assist and guide other teachers in developing their lesson plans and instructional units.

**Share instructional leadership with the principal.** As noted earlier, the master teacher shares responsibility for the adoption of curriculum resources, evaluations and other instruction-related functions, such as interaction with parents.

**Participate in professional development activities.**

- Self- and team-directed activities that are connected to academic standards, school mission and goals
- School planning and decision-making
- Shared accomplishments

Teach ______ percent of the day, a number that is flexible and based on needs.

Master teachers have a broad range of responsibilities at the school site; however, a critical component of their role is to interact regularly with students. This is achieved through regular classroom teaching time.

Master teachers are compensated for twenty (20) additional contract days, which are included in the calculation of the regular teaching contract.

In addition, in consideration of said services rendered, it is agreed that the stipend for the contract year shall be $______. The addendum will be paid as follows: $______.

The above salary is contingent upon continued funding for the ____ school year. All teachers are subject to requalification each year that TAP is funded. The principal will conduct the evaluation of the master teacher for the ____ school year.

The Employee’s acceptance of this contract addendum must be indicated within twenty (20) days after receipt of the contract by his or her signing and returning the contract to the District Personnel Office, or the offer of the contract is revoked.

Teacher Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Principal Signature __________________________ Date __________
Sample Contract Addendum: MENTOR TEACHER

TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement
Sample Mentor Teacher Contract Addendum: SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME, CITY, STATE

THIS CONTRACT for SCHOOL YEAR is made and entered into between SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME, acting by and through its Governing Board and hereinafter referred to as “School District,” and MENTOR TEACHER NAME, hereinafter referred to as “Employee.”

The Employee, being duly qualified, hereby agrees for a period of one year, BEGINNING DATE through ENDING DATE, to devote Employee’s attention to the following duties in addition to the regular teaching contract:

Collaborate with colleagues to construct exemplary lessons. The mentor teacher works with career and master teachers to develop lessons and instructional units.

Provide training to career teachers, other mentor teachers and master teachers. Mentor teachers develop professional development activities that are part of the Ongoing Applied Professional Growth at the school site. This training is also available to other mentor teachers and master teachers, if needed.

Observe and provide peer assistance for colleagues.
› Regularly observe career teachers and other mentors.
› Provide suggestions and constructive critiques of colleagues, teaching primarily during ongoing professional growth time scheduled at the school site.
› Engage in professional development activities that help the teachers develop needed skills.

Mentor career teachers. The primary responsibility of mentor teachers is to oversee the work of career teachers and provide ongoing feedback and guidance to less experienced teachers.

Participate in professional development activities.
› Self-directed, team-oriented activities that are connected to academic standards, school mission and goals
› Observation of mentor and master teachers within the school and beyond to improve upon their mentoring skills and classroom practices
› School planning and decision-making

One period of Professional Growth Block per day. Mentor teachers have one class period per day that can be spent on planning, professional development or other instruction-related activities.

Mentor teachers have a broad range of responsibilities at the school site; however, a critical component of their role is to interact regularly with students. This is achieved through regular classroom teaching time.

Mentor teachers are compensated for ten (10) additional contract days, which are included in the calculation of the regular teaching contract.

In addition, in consideration of said services rendered, it is agreed that the stipend for the contract year shall be $________. The addendum will be paid as follows: $________.

The above salary is contingent upon continued funding for the _______ school year. All teachers are subject to requalification each year that TAP is funded. The principal will conduct the evaluation of the mentor teacher for the _______ school year.

The Employee’s acceptance of this contract addendum must be indicated within ten (10) days after receipt of the contract by his or her signing and returning the contract to the District Personnel Office, or the offer of the contract is revoked.

Teacher Signature

Date

Principal Signature

Date
Ongoing Applied Professional Growth (OAPG)

Cluster Group Configurations
One of the key elements of TAP is shifting the traditional model of professional development to one of ongoing applied professional growth. To accomplish this goal, schools must create time for teachers to meet and work together toward advancing student achievement. Therefore, it is imperative that your school has a plan to create this outcome.

How will cluster groups be configured (grade level, subject area, other)?

How many cluster groups will there be in your school?

How many minutes per week will each cluster group meet? _____
(minimum 50 minutes; recommended 90 minutes)
› Within the daily schedule when students are present: ______
› Within contract time when students are not present: ______
Cluster Group Diagram

Below is a possible example or configuration of your school cluster design. Please project some ideas about how you plan to design your cluster groups.

Sample Cluster Diagram 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Type</th>
<th>Cluster Leader</th>
<th># of Cluster Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 1 (Example)</td>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>G. Stark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Student Academic Engagement and Planning Considerations

The developments below should be under consideration during your planning process but do not have to be included in application submission.

Cluster Group Meetings

Cluster group meetings are vital to the implementation of TAP, and their most important element is the promotion and dissemination of high-quality instructional strategies aimed at meeting student learning needs. To increase the viability of and benefit from cluster groups while teachers are away from their classrooms, students must be engaged in high-quality, academically rigorous activities. For each cluster group, please explain who will be in charge and what educational activities students will do when regular classroom teachers are engaged in cluster group activities.

Weekly Schedule

When implementing TAP, schools often find that their current weekly schedules are not conducive to the new time demands of the system. Therefore, it may be necessary to reconfigure your school’s schedule.

For Master Teachers

› Cluster group meeting times
› Leadership team meeting times
› Master teacher release time (this time is available for demonstration or model lessons; evaluations and observations of teachers; team teaching; and planning cluster meetings)
› Master teacher teaching periods (if applicable)

For Mentor Teachers

› Cluster group meeting times
› Mentor teacher release time (this time is available for coaching mentees or evaluation and observations)
› Mentor teacher teaching periods

For Career Teachers

› Cluster group meeting times
› Teacher classroom teaching time
› Teacher planning time
### Budget Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>WORK SPACE</th>
<th>Planning Time</th>
<th>COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Master Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Replacement (i)</td>
<td>_____ (# of replacement teachers) × $_____ (average teacher salary and benefits cost per teacher) = $_____ (total annual cost of replacement teachers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Salary Augmentation (ii)</td>
<td>_____ (# of master teachers) × $_____ (salary augmentation) = $_____ (total annual cost of master teachers’ salary augmentation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Additional Days</td>
<td>_____ (# of master teachers) × _____ (additional days) × $_____ (district daily rate) = $_____ (total annual cost of master teachers’ additional days)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Mentor Teachers</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Salary Augmentation (ii)</td>
<td>_____ (# of mentor teachers) × $_____ (salary augmentation) = $_____ (total annual cost of mentor teachers’ salary augmentation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Additional Days</td>
<td>_____ (# of mentor teachers) × _____ (additional days) × $_____ (district daily rate) = $_____ (total annual cost of mentor teachers’ additional days)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Substitute Time (iii)</strong></td>
<td>_____ (# of substitute days) × $_____ (cost of substitute per day) = $_____ (total annual cost of subs used for TAP)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Performance Awards (iv)</strong></td>
<td>Based on minimum $2,000 per teacher (# of teachers: _____ × $2,000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Fringe (v) (if applicable)</td>
<td>Based on district allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Professional Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. CORE TAP Trainings for Leadership Team (vi)</td>
<td>_____ (# of teachers participating in the training) × $_____ (cost of training per teacher) × _____ (number of trainings included) = $_____ (total cost of trainings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Startup Workshops (vii)</td>
<td>_____ (# of career teachers) × $_____ (average daily rate for teachers) × 1 day = $_____ (total cost for workshop)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Important Note:** Read all endnotes for clarity
# Budget Worksheet

## EXPENDITURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORK SPACE</th>
<th>Planning Time</th>
<th>COSTS Year 1</th>
<th>COSTS Year 2</th>
<th>COSTS Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPENDITURES</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Travel (viii)</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ (# of staff travel related to TAP) × $ ______ (cost of travel, hotel, meals) = $ ______ (total annual TAP-related travel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Additional Testing (ix)</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ (# of students added to testing program) × $ ______ (cost of test per student) = $ ______ (total annual cost of additional testing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Value-Added Calculations for TAP Schools (x)</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ (# of students) × $2.00 per student = $ ______ (total annual cost of value-added calculations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Value-Added Calculations for Control Schools (xi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ (# of students) × $2.00 per student = $ ______ (total annual cost of value-added calculations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Data Management System (xii)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximately $2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure Total</strong></td>
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</table>

## FUNDING SOURCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTES</th>
<th>Planning Time</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>Note: Please specify the source of funds for each level in this space.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. State Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Local District/ School Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Federal Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Foundation Funding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure Funding</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Funding Source</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Difference</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANT NOTE: READ ALL ENDNOTES FOR CLARITY**
Budget Worksheet Endnotes

IMPORTANT NOTE: READ ALL ENDNOTES FOR CLARITY

i. Replacement Costs – Master teachers either are completely relieved of classroom responsibilities or share a classroom with another teacher. The replacement costs are those associated with covering the master teachers’ classroom/teaching responsibilities while they are performing their master teacher duties. Replacement teachers should be budgeted using the average salary of a teacher in the district. Be sure to include benefits.

ii. Salary Augmentation – This cost consists of the additional compensation (ie. stipends) master teachers and mentor teachers receive for their position, plus associated benefits. Master and mentor teachers work additional days according to local arrangement. Be sure to include benefits.

iii. Substitute Time – May be needed to cover planning committee release time and master and mentor teacher training time in the planning year. In subsequent years, substitutes may be needed to provide release time for mentor teachers, or for conference attendance, etc. This should include only TAP-related substitute expenses.

iv. Performance Awards – Performance-based compensation can be offered to teachers in the form of awards based on performance in the classroom, their student achievement gains, and the entire school’s achievement growth. The total award fund for performance-based awards can be estimated by multiplying the number of teachers in your school by the amount per teacher budgeted for performance awards. If you are going to pay benefits on top of the fund amount, please include the amount.

v. Fringe – The district must determine whether money for taxes and benefits should be detracted from each teacher’s performance award amount OR paid through a separate set of funds.

vi. CORE TAP Trainings for Leadership Team – Costs in this category include TAP trainings offered by NIET that are required for beginning a new TAP school. These training costs may not be applicable if training is provided by a state-authorized TAP team or service provider.

vii. Startup Workshops – No cost for districts that have available contract days that can be used for workshop.

viii. Travel – Cost of travel for school staff members to visit other TAP schools, attend TAP Conferences, etc.

ix. Additional Testing – Additional cost of testing students not currently in a testing program (if any).

x. Value-Added Calculations for TAP Schools – Cost of value-added calculations for classroom-level and school-level student achievement.

xi. Value-Added Calculations for Control Schools – To conduct the TAP evaluation research, each TAP school must be compared to other similar schools not doing TAP. Control schools are selected based on demographic and socioeconomic factors, and if they take the same battery of standardized tests as TAP schools. TAP schools must cover the cost of the control schools’ value-added calculations.
Glossary of Terms

**Career Teacher**
A career teacher is a regular classroom teacher. This teacher may be new to teaching or may have taught for many years. Career teachers participate fully in cluster group meetings, are evaluated by the principal, master teacher and mentor teacher, and are eligible to receive a performance-based award each year. After two years of teaching experience, career teachers may apply to fill open mentor teacher positions.

**Certified TAP Evaluator**
Before conducting teacher evaluations, all TAP principals, master teachers and mentor teachers are required to participate in an extensive training program and pass a performance-based certification test. The rationale behind the Certified TAP Evaluator Test is to ensure that evaluators have an exemplary knowledge of the TAP Rubrics and inter-rater reliability. All teachers who pass the certification test are rated fairly and accurately using the TAP teaching standards and in comparison to the TAP National Evaluators.

**Classroom Achievement Gains**
These are the student growth gains each teacher produces for the group of students he or she teaches, based on standardized student achievement test results or Student Learning Objectives (SLO’s).

**Cluster Group**
In a TAP school, a cluster group is the basic unit for teacher professional growth. The focus of the work done in a cluster group is on instructional improvement for increasing student achievement. The new learning in cluster groups is aligned to the process of the STEPS for Effective Learning and focuses intently on student needs. Each cluster group is overseen by a master teacher and co-led or led by a mentor teacher, and includes all teachers from a defined group. For example, depending upon a school’s size and configuration, a cluster group may comprise of all the teachers in a single grade or subject area. Specialists working across grade levels either have their own cluster group or are assigned to one. Some cluster activities may include: test analysis for instructional improvement; alignment of standards, instruction and assessment; development of group members’ instructional skills; classroom observations of demonstration lessons; and teachers becoming familiarized with the TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards. Each school must restructure its weekly schedule to allow pupil-free time for cluster groups to meet during the school day.

**Cluster Group Long-Range Plan**
The cluster long-range plan is a document in which the school goals are translated into specific instructional strategies to be taught in a cluster. Within the document, these strategies are segmented/sequenced appropriately to align with the STEPS for Effective Learning and extend over a period of approximately nine weeks. This is designed to be a living document, and reassessments of the plan, based on teacher/student data, are to be made on a continual basis. After the designated time block is completed, a benchmark assessment is given to assess the effect of the instructional strategies, and to gather data from which to create the new plan.

**Cluster Group Meeting Record**
This is a formal written record of cluster group operations. A record is kept for each meeting and includes a description of the cluster goal, outcomes and follow-up. Additionally, each record is linked to the cluster group’s long-range plan and documents how the STEPS for Effective Learning were used to achieve cluster goals.

**Compensation Spreadsheet**
This is a spreadsheet that is used to calculate an individual teacher’s actual performance award based on his/her: (1) Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards, (2) classroom-level student value-added achievement gains and (3) the school’s school-wide value-added achievement gains.
Glossary of Terms

Contract Addendum
Master and mentor teachers sign a contract addendum that extends their working contract beyond the traditional contract year and outlines their additional authority and responsibilities.

Field Testing
Field testing is the process by which master teachers vet instructional strategies before utilizing them in professional development meetings.

Individual Growth Plans
Individual Growth Plans are used to develop formal plans for each TAP teacher. Plans are developed by TAP teachers in collaboration with his/her master/mentor teacher. The purpose of the reflective journal is to assist teachers in accomplishing instructional goals that lead to increased student achievement. Each teacher in a TAP school is required to develop and continually update his/her personal reflective journal.

Instructionally Focused Accountability and Performance-Based Compensation Committee
This is the school committee that disseminates the TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide to all teachers in the school and to the school board.

Leadership Team
It includes all master and mentor teachers in a TAP school and is led by the principal. The team is responsible for overall implementation and operation of TAP. The team is expected to meet regularly, and its primary activities include analyzing student data to create the school academic achievement plan; developing and reviewing cluster groups’ goals, activities and outcomes; becoming Certified TAP Evaluators; conducting teacher evaluations; and ensuring inter-rater reliability regarding teacher evaluations.

Leadership Team Meeting Log
This is a formal written record of Leadership Team operations. It is intended to track the team’s oversight of Individual Growth Plans, cluster group operations and the feedback provided regarding these TAP processes. The log also provides a record of the team’s self-monitoring for evaluator inter-rater reliability.

Master Teacher
A master teacher occupies the top-ranked teaching position in a TAP school. A master teacher is a highly skilled professional educator who shares significant leadership responsibilities and authority with the principal. A master teacher oversees the professional development of teachers under his/her supervision, facilitates curriculum and assessment planning, and conducts teacher evaluations tied to compensation. It is recommended that master teachers teach two hours per day, using the remainder of their workday to fulfill master responsibilities. On a weekly basis, these responsibilities include overseeing cluster group professional growth plans, activities and outcomes; team-teaching with colleagues; and providing demonstration lessons. To qualify for a master position, a teacher must have demonstrated expertise in instruction, content, curriculum development, student learning, data analysis and mentoring. A minimum of five years’ teaching experience is also required for all master teachers. All openings for master teachers are filled competitively. Successful applicants receive a significant salary augmentation and are paid to work at least 10-20 days beyond the traditional school calendar.

Master Teacher Meeting
These meetings are held by the district TAP coordinator and/or NIET TAP program specialist to provide TAP-related training to master teachers. When possible, principals are included in these meetings. These workshops focus on the TAP processes, including conducting effective cluster meetings, the STEPS for Effective Learning, the coaching processes, exemplary instructional practices and the TAP teacher evaluation system.
Glossary of Terms

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

The MOU is a document between TAP schools, districts and NIET. Though not legally binding, this document outlines each party’s responsibilities in implementing TAP.

**Mentor Teacher**

In a TAP school, mentor teachers provide day-to-day coaching and mentoring services to the teachers under their supervision. They collaborate with colleagues to construct benchmark lessons, to team-teach, and to demonstrate model instructional skills to their mentees. Under the guidance of a master teacher, mentor teachers plan and facilitate cluster group professional growth meetings and conduct teacher evaluations for career teachers, other mentor teachers and master teachers. To become a mentor teacher, an applicant must be able to demonstrate instructional expertise and have at least two years’ exemplary teaching experience and strong recommendations. Mentoring training is preferred. All openings for mentor teacher positions are filled competitively. Successful applicants receive a significant salary augmentation and are paid to work at least 5-10 days beyond the traditional school calendar.

**Performance Award Fund**

This is the amount of money the school designates for teacher performance-based awards each year.

**Performance Award Weights**

The performance award fund is broken down into three award pools, which designate the percent of each teacher’s performance award that is allocated to (1) skills, knowledge and responsibilities (50 percent of the award); (2) classroom achievement gains (30 percent of the award); and (3) school-wide achievement gains (20 percent of the award).

**Performance-Based Compensation System**

These policies and evaluation instruments are needed for a school to implement teacher performance-based pay. They were developed and are provided by NIET in the TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide.

**Ratio of Master to Career Teachers**

The TAP System recommends a ratio of 1 master teacher to every 15 career teachers.

**Ratio of Mentor to Career Teachers**

The TAP System recommends a ratio of 1 mentor teacher to every 8 career teachers.

**Replacement Costs**

Master teachers are often either completely relieved of classroom responsibilities or share a classroom with another teacher. The replacement costs are those associated with covering the master teachers’ classroom/teaching responsibilities while they are performing their master teacher duties.

**Replacement Teachers/Specialists**

In a TAP school, replacement teachers/specialists serve two roles. First, their presence allows master and mentor teachers to have release time to facilitate professional development among the teachers. The replacement teachers’/specialists’ second role is to fill in for teachers who are participating in their cluster meetings.
Glossary of Terms

**Salary Augmentation for Master Teacher**
This is compensation provided as a stipend for the added roles and responsibilities assumed by the master teacher. The recommended salary augmentation for master teachers is $7,000–$15,000 (variable based on local economic conditions).

**Salary Augmentation for Mentor Teacher**
This is compensation provided as a stipend for the added roles and responsibilities assumed by the mentor teacher. The recommended salary augmentation for mentor teachers is $2,500–$7,000 (variable based on local economic conditions).

**School Review**
School Reviews are conducted at school sites or remotely by NIET representatives or designees, and are designed to evaluate how fully and effectively each school is implementing the TAP elements.

**Startup of School Workshop**
Each year prior to the opening of school, all faculty members in TAP schools participate in a workshop led by the TAP leadership team. The focus of this workshop in the first year of TAP operations is to prepare all teachers in the school for participating in TAP by initiating the master and mentor teachers as school leaders; activating the teacher professional growth cluster groups; and coordinating individual, cluster group and school-wide professional growth plans. In the second year, the focus is on preparing for teacher evaluations. Teachers review the TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards, including the TAP Rubrics, and have an opportunity to rate themselves and other teachers.

**STEPS for Effective Learning**
The *STEPS for Effective Learning* is a five-step process that cluster groups are required to use to (1) identify student learning needs, (2) obtain new teacher learning aligned to student need and formatted for the classroom, (3) develop the new learning with support in the classroom, (4) apply the new learning to the classroom and (5) evaluate the impact on student performance.

**TAP CORE Training**
There are eight days of required formal trainings, called the TAP CORE Training, that all TAP leadership team members must attend. The TAP CORE Trainings are instructor-led and delivered during three multi-day sessions of intensive off-site workshops. The sessions consist of the following trainings: Overview and Evaluation A (3 days); Cluster and Leadership Team (3 days); and Evaluation B with a certification test (2 days). The first six days of CORE Training are required prior to the start of school, while the other two days are conducted during the beginning of the first year of TAP implementation.

**TAP Evaluation and Compensation (TEC) Guide**
This document serves as the guide for TAP schools to implement the Instructionally Focused Accountability and Performance-Based Compensation Systems.

**TAP Leadership Team Handbook**
Developed by NIET, the TAP Leadership Handbook is the guide to leadership team members to develop and implement professional growth cluster groups, evaluate instruction, and provide constructive coaching and support to teachers. The handbook provides a variety of resources to support leadership team members and includes sections on (1) TAP Leadership Team, (2) Cluster Meetings, (3) Field Testing, (4) Individual Growth Plan, (5) the TAP Rubrics and (6) other TAP resources. This resource includes the primary training content for new and developing TAP schools.
Glossary of Terms

**TAP System Training Portal**
The TAP System Training Portal is an interactive Web tool that provides individualized TAP trainings and support. TAP career, mentor and master teachers, along with district and state TAP leaders, have real-time access to the latest TAP trainings that they can download, review and deliver to teachers in order to improve instruction. The portal includes the TAP Strategies Library, the TAP Video Library, TAP Training Modules, TAP publications and materials from all of the TAP Summer Institute (TSI) and National TAP Conference training sessions.

**tapObserver**
The tapObserver app enhances the TAP System evaluation process by helping evaluators (principals, master and mentor teachers) to more efficiently and accurately collect evidence during a classroom observation. It is a powerful tool for providing evaluation feedback and support more quickly and thoroughly to improve teacher practice.

**TAP Training: Evaluation Refresher**
TAP training for principals and master and mentor teachers are intended to provide a review of the evaluation and conferencing skills learned in previous trainings. It is recommended that these workshops be offered annually, followed by recertification testing for Certified TAP Evaluators.

**Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards**
The TAP teaching standards are the Instruction, Designing and Planning Instruction and The Learning Environment standards used to measure teacher performance based on classroom observation.

**Testing Requirements for Students**
TAP requires that students in applicable grade levels be tested each spring. Norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests must be used.

**Value-Added Assessment**
This is a statistical model for gauging how much students gain or improve in academic achievement in a given year, from pre- to post-testing. Because value-added calculates improvements in achievement each year, students’ starting academic attainment levels do not affect value-added estimates.