

R3 Framework Evaluation Brief



May 2019

This edition of the *R3 Framework Evaluation Brief* revisits teacher knowledge and perceptions about the Career Pathways Model (CPM) leadership positions and pipeline programs that are part of Pitt County Schools' *R3 Framework* initiative. There were 485 teachers participating in the CPM during the 2018-2019 school year (**Table 1**).¹ Data for this report were collected from teachers who did not participate in any CPM positions/programs in order to assess changes in their levels of understanding and perceptions about the value and benefits of teacher leadership opportunities as a result of the continued rollout and communication of the initiative.

Table 1
2018-2019 Career Pathways Model Positions
 Number of participating teachers

	Number of Teachers
Multi-Classroom Teacher (MCT)	15
Co-Teacher (CoT)	34
Facilitating Teacher (FT)	89
Collaborating Teacher (CT)	264
Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI)	48
Key BT Program	35
Total	485

The same online survey was used in the spring of 2018 and administered to teachers who, at that time, had not participated in the CPM. The survey was distributed in February, 2019 via the Pitt County *Info, Info* weekly email. A total of 153 teachers from 37 schools completed the survey.² Key findings are organized into the areas bulleted below.

- Communication of Career Pathway Model Opportunities
- Teachers' Understanding of CPM Opportunities
- Teachers' Perceptions of the Value and Benefit of CPM Opportunities

¹ There were 307 teachers participating in CPM during the 2017-2018 school year.

² This total represents about 12% of the teacher population in Pitt County Schools. In 2018, 258 teachers from 39 schools completed the survey.

Communication of Career Pathway Model Opportunities

Information about the Career Pathways Model opportunities was made available to teachers through various sources, which are listed in **Table 2**. In 2018, the top two sources were school administrators and teacher leaders (46% of teachers reported each source). One year later, there was a slight shift in primary sources with a higher percentage of teacher respondents learning about leadership opportunities from teacher leaders (52%) and fewer learning from school administrators (33%). In addition, more teachers gained information from the Pitt County *Info, Info* emails in 2019 (i.e., 50%) compared to 2018 (i.e., 41%).

Table 2
Career Pathways Sources of Information
Percentage of teachers reporting each source

	2018	2019
Teacher leaders	46%	52%
Pitt County <i>Info, Info</i> emails	41%	50%
School administrators	46%	33%
Instructional Coach	23%	21%
Beginning Teacher Coach/Mentor	14%	17%
Other non-participating teachers	16%	10%
DEEL staff	6%	10%
Pitt County district-level staff	9%	8%

The increased percentage of teachers who learned about the leadership positions from teacher leaders is likely a function of the growing number of teacher leaders across the county. Additionally, the DEEL office encouraged Facilitating Teachers (FTs), in particular, to share their Community of Practice (CoP) projects and outcomes with other teachers and administrators at their schools. Indeed, many teachers (i.e., 68%) reported that teacher leaders provided presentations or updates at staff, PLC, and School Leadership Team meetings, to name a few. The frequency of these meetings were not always specified but varied from monthly to once or twice a year.

For their part, school administrators continued to support communication and understanding of teacher leadership in various ways, according to most of the survey respondents (see **Table 3** on the following page). Specifically, 81% of respondents agreed that their school administrators fostered trust between teacher leaders and colleagues. Eighty percent agreed that school administrators clearly communicated the role of teacher leaders in school improvement and 73% agreed that their administrator provided opportunities for teachers to learn about teacher leaders. Finally, 74% agreed that administrators used a fair and transparent process for teacher leadership recruitment. Moreover, the percentage of teachers reporting agreement with these statements was higher in 2019 compared to 2018.

Table 3
School Administrator Support for Teacher Leadership
 Percentage of teachers reporting agree or strongly agree

School administrators...	2018	2019
foster trust between teacher leaders and colleagues.	73%	81%
clearly communicate the role of teacher leaders in school improvement.	70%	80%
recruit/select/recommend teachers for leadership positions using a fair and transparent selection process.	64%	74%
provide opportunities for teachers to learn more about the purpose of teacher leaders.	62%	73%

Even still, it should be noted that some teachers³ felt they did not receive sufficient information or were not sure if information about teacher leaders was provided to them or others at their school. Put by one teacher, “I am not certain if we are receiving any information. We do have a cohort at our school...The only information I have gotten is from the district through emails.”

Teachers’ Understanding of CPM Opportunities

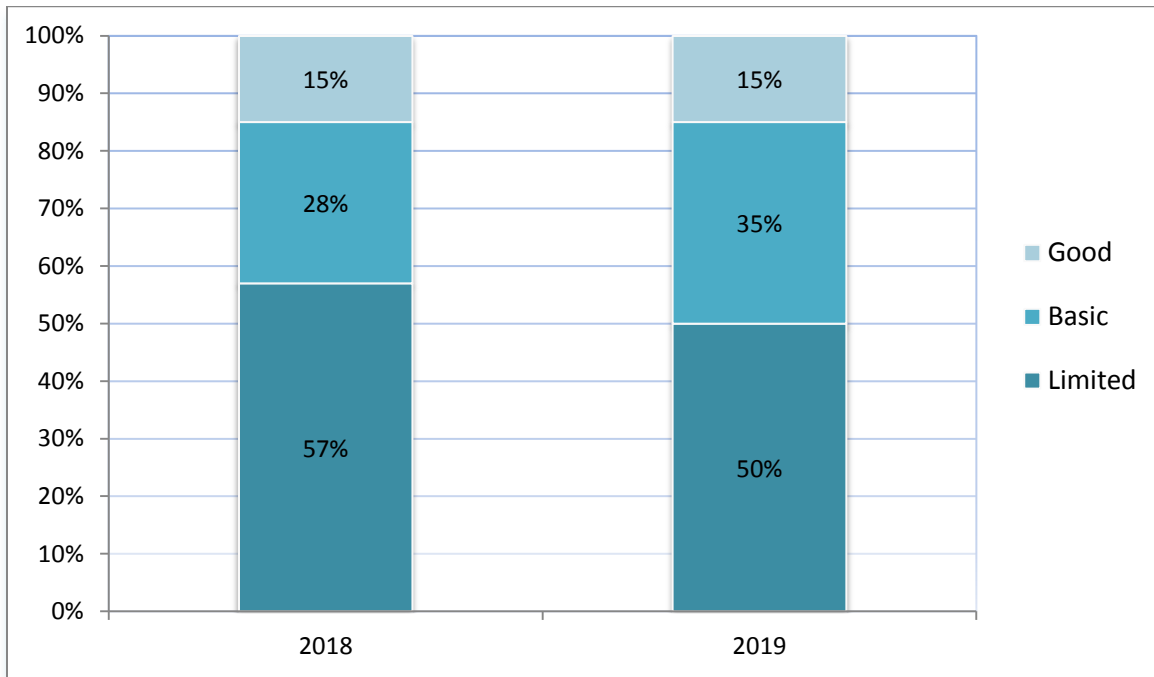
Most likely as a result of information provided by teacher leaders, Pitt County emails, administrators, etc., more teachers understood the CPM positions and programs in 2019 compared to 2018.⁴ Seen in **Table 4** on the following page, 35% of teacher respondents reported a *basic* level of understanding in 2019 whereas only 28% reported the same *basic* level one year prior. In other words, these teachers understood the general purposes, requirements, and benefits of the positions and were interested in more specific information about the positions. Though not reported in the table, teachers were most knowledgeable about the Key BT program and the FT position. This is not surprising considering that the Key BT program is the longest standing program in the CPM (launched in 2014-2015) and FTs provided presentations at their schools, unlike the MCT position.

Alternatively, fewer teachers had *limited* understanding of the positions in 2019 compared to 2018; however, no change was seen in the percentage of teachers who had *good* understanding. One possible explanation for this is that teachers were learning more but not enough to fully understand teacher leadership positions and programs in Pitt County.

³ About 38% of teachers who provided remarks on the survey indicated that they had not received enough information.

⁴ Teachers rated their level of understanding about the purposes, and eligibility and participation requirements for the positions and pathways using a scale that included three levels: limited, basic, and good for each position. The data were aggregated across position to simplify the interpretation.

Table 4
Teachers’ Understanding of the Career Pathways Model Positions and Programs
 Percentage of teachers at each level of understanding



When asked what additional information would be helpful to them, teachers commonly requested information about the qualifications for each position and the timeframe for the submission of applications. They also asked for more information that would help them better understand the teacher leader roles in the classroom and the expected impact on their schools. Some also asked for more clarity on the position eligibility for teachers in non-traditional roles (e.g., non-core classes, special education, etc.). For example, one teacher wrote, “It would be nice to see leadership opportunities expanded to those not in the classroom (counselors, media coordinators, CDCs, ICs, etc.). We all teach students, not all of us have direct instruction in a classroom.”

Teachers’ Perceptions of the Value and Benefit of CPM Opportunities

Finally, the study examined teachers’ perceptions about the value and benefit of the CPM positions and pathway programs. Overall, the data indicated that teachers felt that the opportunities were a step in the right direction in terms of supporting teachers and encouraging teacher leadership. Furthermore, many agreed that the CPM may be an effective way of retaining teachers. All of the agreement percentages in 2019 were higher than in 2018.

Specifically, **Table 5** (following page) shows that 71% of respondents were in agreement that the district was committed to developing and supporting teacher leaders and another 64% agreed that CPM was aligned with educators’ professional growth goals. Sixty-five percent agreed that it was effective for teacher retention. For those who offered comments about teacher retention, the general sentiment was that the positions were a good alternative to the administrator career track, the latter of which may not appeal to all teachers. Put by one person, “The ability to transition to these positions rather than an administrator track is very appealing to me. I think that this concept would be very effective in retention of teachers.”

Table 5
Teachers’ Attitudes about the Value and Benefit of
Career Pathway Model Positions and Programs
 Percentage of teachers who agree or strongly agree*

The Career Pathway Model positions and programs...	2018	2019
demonstrate the district’s commitment to developing and supporting effective teachers.	64%	71%
may be an effective way for retaining effective teachers in our district.	58%	65%
are aligned with educators’ professional growth goals.	60%	64%
have resulted in a more genuine focus on ways to support teachers.	44%	55%
have eligibility criteria that are fair.	38%	44%
amount of compensation for these positions are worth applying for them.	38%	44%
motivate me to apply for one or more of these positions in the future.	37%	37%

* Response selections included: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, and not sure

The table also shows that more teachers were in agreement with statements about the fairness of eligibility criteria and the amount of compensation in 2019 compared to 2018; however, the percentages were below the 50% mark. Earlier it was reported that most teachers agreed that their administrators used a fair and transparent selection process for teacher the positions; therefore, it seems that these teachers take issue with the eligibility criteria over the actual selection process. Recall that some teachers questioned the eligibility of the positions for non-classroom teachers. Others believe that teachers should be compensated for their efforts and accomplishments despite participation in leadership roles. Below are comments from teachers that capture this general sentiment.

“Teachers are asked to do more and more and are only compensated for some [things]. There are so many teachers giving their time in other ways that are not compensated for it and it sometimes feels a bit unfair.”

“As a teacher I feel this program needs to be revamped to help all teachers not just the select few. What about the people already helping to grow teachers such as lead mentors, teacher mentors, instructional coaches, department chairs, buddy teachers, teachers leading PD, etc.? All of this was in place before, for very little or no pay.”

Finally, there was no change in the percentage of teachers who were motivated to apply for the positions from 2018 to 2019.⁵ This findings suggests that perhaps not all teachers may want to pursue leadership opportunities and the added responsibilities that these positions entail, or may not qualify for the positions.

⁵ It should be noted that this does not take into account the teachers who applied and got accepted in 2019 and hence are not a part of the survey sample.

Summary

This edition of the *R3 Framework Evaluation Brief* highlights several key findings about teacher support for the *R3 Framework* initiative, which we know from the research literature is critical to the successful implementation, impact, and long-term sustainability of any new initiative. Overall, it appears that Pitt County Schools continues to be successful in building buy-in from teachers across the district. From the report, we know that teachers continued to receive information about the Career Pathway Model opportunities during year three of the initiative. Consequently, half of the teacher survey respondents were knowledgeable about the various leadership opportunities and more so than in the previous year. Moreover, a growing number of teachers saw the value of the positions and programs in terms of supporting teacher leadership and retention. Nevertheless, some teachers were not motivated to pursue leadership positions, and this could be for a variety of reasons including not being eligible or not wanting to take on additional responsibilities, to name a few. Even still, they would like more acknowledgement (i.e., in the form of additional compensation) for their efforts to impact teaching and learning that go above and beyond expectations but are outside of the CPM positions and programs.

The *R3 Framework Evaluation Brief* is designed to provide Pitt County Schools (PCS) with “real-time” data that is collected as part of Measurement Incorporated’s external evaluation of the *R3 Framework*.⁶ The reports present key findings on the development, rollout, and implementation of the various elements of the *R3 Framework* for the purpose of informing continuous improvement efforts. Outcome findings are summarized in annual end-of-year reports, which include a comprehensive set of data findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Measurement Incorporated was contracted by Pitt County Schools to conduct a 5-year independent evaluation of the *R3 Framework*. For further information about this report or about the evaluation, please contact Dr. Shelly Menendez at (630) 857-9592 or smenendez@measinc.com.

⁶ R3 stands for Recruit, Retain, and Reward. The Framework is a model that includes multiple career pathways and differentiated performance-based compensation that is designed to recruit, retain, and reward highly effective teachers. It is funded in part by a state Teacher Compensation Model grant and a federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant.