**Section 25.32 Teacher Leader Endorsement**

The Section establishes the requirements for the receipt of a teacher leader endorsement valid for prekindergarten through age 22 and for approval of educator preparation programs to provide the program required for receipt of the endorsement. The teacher leader endorsement is intended to increase the quality of leadership, as well as teaching and learning practices, and recognize the critical importance that leadership by teachers brings to the overall school improvement mission of the school and its personnel. The teacher leader endorsement will create a career path to retain and develop high-performing teachers for leadership roles; formalize, define, and build the competencies necessary for high-quality leadership to improve student learning; and recognize and encourage shared leadership and decision-making in schools to maximize outcomes for children.

a) For the purposes of this Section, a teacher leader is defined as an individual with the capacity and skills to:

1) harness the collective knowledge of teachers to have a positive impact on teaching and learning and school and student success;

2) promote shared governance and leadership in schools by working effectively with the principal and other adults in the school, with a consistent focus on student learning and achievement;

3) model excellence in teaching with a strong foundation in improving the climate of the school and classroom, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and intervention;

4) provide guidance, coaching, mentoring, influence, direction, and support to teachers to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and

5) promote and influence change to improve school and student outcomes.

b) A teacher leader may serve in a variety of roles within the school district, including, but not limited to:

1) curriculum specialist (i.e., identifying, designing, and implementing curriculum and school and district improvement);

2) coach (i.e., providing coaching to other teachers and staff on instructional practice and methods);

3) mentor teacher (i.e., providing mentoring to new teachers or others in need of assistance);

4) department chair or lead teacher;

5) content specialist (i.e., leading instructional programs in a specific content area);

6) teacher leaders responsible for supervising others, provided that a supervisory endorsement is not required pursuant to 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1.705 (Requirements for Supervisory and Administrative Staff) for the position to which the teacher leader is assigned;

7) program leaders (i.e., relative to the climate of the school and classroom, curriculum, instruction, or assessment); and

8) other areas of responsibility as identified by school districts.

c) A teacher leader endorsement on a PEL will be available to persons who fulfill the requirements of Section 21B-25(2)(E) of the Code and this Section. In order to receive a teacher leader endorsement, a candidate holding a PEL endorsed in a teaching field shall:

1) have obtained a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution; and

2) have completed a program that meets the requirements set forth in this Section.

d) Only institutions of higher education and not-for-profit entities that have been recognized under Subpart C to conduct educator preparation programs may apply to the State Board for approval to offer a teacher leader endorsement program. Each program shall address at least the coursework listed in Section 21B-25(2)(E) of the Code and this subsection (d):

1) Leadership, to address:

A) knowledge of leadership frameworks and models of shared governance;

B) understanding teacher evaluation models and training;

C) ability to hold self and others accountable for results; and

D) ability to lead teams in setting goals and achieving results.

2) Designing professional development to meet teaching and learning needs, to include:

A) understanding, applying, and evaluating the specific needs of new teachers for induction and mentoring;

B) ability to coach teachers and staff;

C) ability to understand, apply, and evaluate models of effective professional development; and

D) ability to observe instruction and provide coaching, mentoring, or professional development feedback to teachers.

3) Building school culture that focuses on student learning to address:

A) understanding diverse learners (including students with Individualized Education Programs, English learners, students who are underrepresented in the school population, and other at-risk students) and their families and communities;

B) ability to analyze and interpret data around school culture, working and learning conditions, and climate;

C) understanding the impact of instructional models and practices on improving learning, as well as the culture and climate of the school and classrooms; and

D) ability to understand and apply to the learning environment the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards set forth at 23 Ill. Adm. Code 555.Appendix A.

4) Using assessments to improve student learning and foster student achievement.

5) Building collaboration with teachers and stakeholders.

e) A request for program approval shall be submitted to the State Superintendent for consideration in accordance to the requirements of Section 25.120.

f) Actions following upon the recommendation of SEPLB shall be as described in Section 25.160.

g) An approved teacher leader program shall be subject to the review process set forth in Subpart C.

(Source: Amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 12973, effective July 13, 2022)