

Educator Career Ladders in Top-Performing International Educational Systems

Shanghai

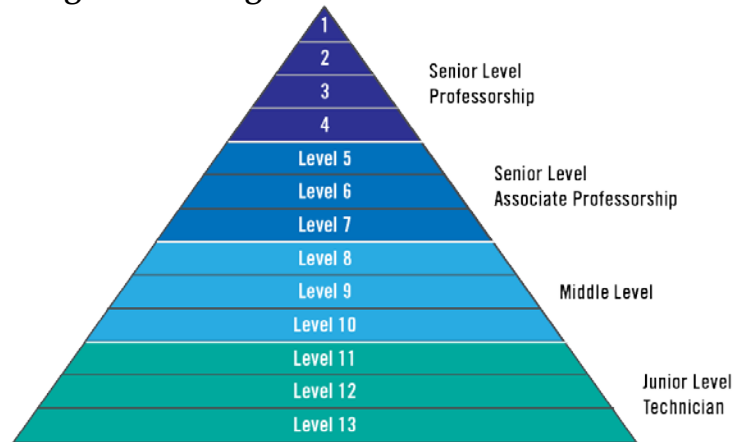
Shanghai's school board, the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, is responsible for education policy and operations for the whole metro area. The Commission borrowed the idea of a career ladder for the Shanghai school system based on its understanding of how Western higher education institutions worked, on the logic that if a progression like instructor, assistant professor, associate professor and full professor works in higher education to incentivize teachers at that level to get better and better at their work, then it should work equally well at the elementary and secondary education level as well. As a result, very few teachers leave the profession, with the Ministry estimating the rate at about 1 percent annually.

Teachers in Shanghai are formally classified into four "grades" or ranks: probationary status, second level, first level, and senior teacher. To be promoted to the next grade, teachers must take a written test of language competence, write research papers, submit to interviews, and be observed by experienced teachers. Each grade is further divided into about four levels each. At the very top of the structure is the Professor Master Teacher. There are very few of these in Shanghai. As one moves up the ladder, the most important qualification for advancement is excellence as a teacher. But later, in the higher ranges of the ladder, other competencies become no less important, including one's ability to mentor other teachers, one's record as a leader of teacher teams and, finally, one's skill as an action researcher. As one moves up the ladder, one is expected to lead research teams of teachers. These are teams that have been tasked with conducting research and development on various aspects of school practice in order to improve curriculum, instruction, materials or assessment.

The teachers who lead these teams are expected to produce research papers, many of which are published in refereed journals run by the universities in Shanghai. Teachers given the rank of Professor Master Teacher have published papers judged to be of the same quality as those published by university professors and, as fully qualified researchers, are given the same rank. Their research papers are circulated to teachers throughout the Shanghai system, equal in size to many American states put together,

and these teachers are put on the lecture circuit for teachers' professional development. We point this out to show how the career ladder is used to both develop and showcase teachers who are encouraged to be major drivers of school improvement in what has become one of the world's leading education systems.

Figure 1: Shanghai Career Ladder for Teachers



Source: Developing Shanghai's Teachers, 2016

Teachers on the lower levels of the ladder are promoted to middle status after five-years of teaching and positive school-based evaluations, whereas promotion to the advanced levels occurs after another five years of service and both school- and district-level evaluations. Middle level teachers first self-evaluate their work and then colleagues provide feedback; afterward, this is given to the department head and then the principal.

Middle level teachers must apply for advancement to senior level at the district level (there are many districts in Shanghai). The school must approve the application first, which typically means the principal is in agreement that the teacher has the qualifications to apply. At the district level, a committee of experts – typically subject area coordinators or teacher professional development staff who themselves have been recognized for their superior performance as teachers – review the applications and make the decision about rank advancement. Promotion from one level to the next often requires teachers to be observed, give demonstration lessons, develop new and struggling teachers, and publish in education journals. Peer- and self- evaluations also inform the annual evaluation process, as well as teaching load and additional responsibilities, such as serving as class advisor or leading a subject team, grade team, or lesson planning group. Schools and the district also administer student and parent surveys as part of the school evaluation process. This multifaceted process varies from school to school, with principals and expert teachers evaluating individual teachers.

Districts limit the number of teachers who can advance to the next level, which makes advancement competitive. And there are requirements for how long a teacher must have served at a given level before he or she can advance to the next level. Currently, only about 6.6 percent of teachers have reached the senior teacher grade.

Highly ranked teachers often serve in leadership positions in schools, such as leaders of *jiaoyanzu*, or teacher research groups. Higher-ranked teachers also assist senior teachers who have not yet advanced in rank. These opportunities enable highly ranked teachers to serve as coaches and lead teachers, while providing additional avenues for professional learning for lower-ranked teachers. *Becoming a principal, administrator, or senior ministry official requires service as an accomplished teacher.*

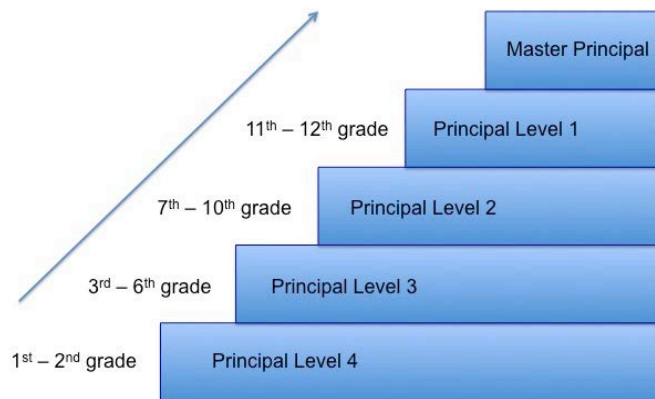
Teachers and administrators in senior positions in the Shanghai system are expected to identify teachers at lower levels in the system who show promise and to groom them for advancement by giving them mentored opportunities to take on the kinds of responsibilities in which they can learn what they have to learn to demonstrate the standards for advancement. Because advancement is determined by other teachers as well as administrators who are not the applicant's direct supervisors, the system operates to reward true competence rather than to reward supervisor's favorites.

Principal Career Ladder in Shanghai

In addition to the ladder for teachers, Shanghai has a separate career ladder for school principals, which features five distinct levels and 12 grades (Figure 2). Each grade typically represents three years of service as a principal, but principals can be promoted one grade band per year if they earn an excellent appraisal. Once principals reach the highest grade within a level, they can apply to be promoted to the next level. Principals who are on Level 3 and Level 2 are allowed to apply for the next level on the career ladder after three years of service at each level, whereas those on Level 1 can apply for the Master Principal career stage after two years at that level.

Figure 2. Shanghai's Career Ladder for Principals

Principal Career Ladder



Promotion on the principal career ladder is similar to the teacher career ladder. Principals are regularly monitored and have annual evaluations. Those who earn an “excellent” appraisal on their annual evaluation can be promoted one grade band a year within a level; those who earn two consecutive “qualified” evaluations can also be promoted a grade band. They are assessed on six major performance domains and 12 performance indicators. The six domains are:

- Education ethos (e.g., building a collaborative and professional environment);
- School management (e.g., financial management, teacher retention, and teacher job satisfaction);
- Teaching that supports individual student interests, supports problem – posing and –solving learning, integrates knowledge across disciplines, and fosters innovation and creativity;
- Staff development of professionals who contribute to the system;
- Personal qualities; and
- Overall school performance, which includes student performance on exams and in academic competitions.

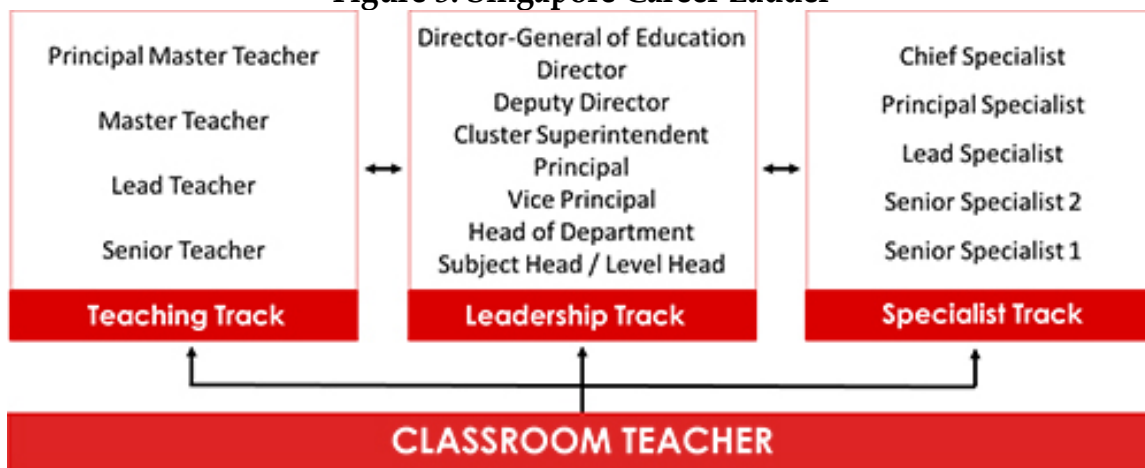
Principals can earn up to 10 points on each of the 12 indicators, for a total score of 120. Those who aspire to become Master Principals must score at least 108 points or above on this review scheme, averaging 9 points for each of the indicators.

Singapore

In Singapore, the career ladder also contributes to a very high retention rate, with about 3 percent leaving over a 5-year period. There are three tracks on the career ladder in

Singapore: a teaching track, a leadership track, and a senior specialist track. (See Figure 3.) All educators begin on the same rung of the ladder, and then choose one of these tracks once they and their supervisors mutually decide that they are ready to take on additional roles apart from teaching. The teaching track is designed for teachers who aspire to become expert teachers, largely remain within classrooms, mentor their colleagues, and continue to be experts in pedagogy. The leadership track is for those who seek school leadership positions or leadership roles in the Ministry of Education. The specialist track is for those who develop deep knowledge and skills in specific disciplines, which can bring them to Ministry-level leadership positions focused on curriculum development and evaluation.

Figure 3: Singapore Career Ladder



Teachers are regularly assessed through the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS). Advancement from one level to the next requires a teacher or school leader to demonstrate competency at that level and potential for the next on EPMS.

Furthermore, advancement is never assured: for a teacher to advance to a position at the next level, that position must be open and they must successfully apply for it.

The EPMS does not specify exactly how supervisors must assess their direct reports. Instead, it is a very broad set of competencies and outcomes. These outcomes are called Key Result Areas (KRAs), which are used to set targets and review progress and achievements. Figure 4 summarizes the competencies and Key Result Areas.

Figure 4. Competencies and Key Result Areas

Competencies				Key Result Areas
Individual Attributes	Professional Mastery	Organisational Excellence	Effective Collaboration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Values and Ethics Self-Management and Development Analytical Thinking and Intellectual Flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-Centric, Values-Driven Practice Curriculum and Content Pedagogy and Instruction Assessment and Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visioning and Planning Action Management and Implementation Culture Building and People Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal Skills and Relationships Teamwork and Team Building Internal and External Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Outcomes Professional Outcomes Organisational Outcomes

Because these competencies are so broad and the Singaporean system relies heavily on professional judgment, individual principals are responsible for deciding on more concrete evaluation metrics and processes, such as behavioral indicators, specific service to the school, and self-reflection tools and protocols. But because training in Singapore is uniformly rigorous and expectations are clearly communicated, there is remarkable consistency across the system in how principals evaluate teachers.

In general, teachers meet with their direct supervisor (typically the Vice Principal for Education) to discuss what their goals for the year should be, what new experiences and challenges they would like to try, and co-design an evaluation plan. Based on that discussion, the supervisor will observe the teacher throughout the year, collect data on their performance, and monitor their participation in helping to mentor others, serve on committees, and otherwise support the school. Teachers will typically have a midyear check-in with their supervisors to report on progress and determine whether any support is needed. At the end of the year, all members of the school leadership team will meet to rate all of the teachers in the building. Among the topics they will discuss are whether teachers met their annual goals, what areas of support they need moving forward, and whether they are suited for new and progressively more challenging roles in the future. Leaders will often give promising young teachers the opportunity to

unofficially assume certain duties from a higher level of the ladder under supervision for a set trial period (often six months to a year) in order to give them exposure to new skills and test whether they are ready to move up. This is the most common way by which fitness for the next level of the ladder is assessed. This process is known colloquially in Singapore as “upmanning.”

The principal’s own supervisor, the Cluster Superintendent, also participates in all end-of-year evaluation meetings. The Cluster Superintendent is a mentor who is responsible for helping a group of 10-15 school principals develop professionally, collaborate, and improve their own schools and their colleague’s schools as well.

Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers occupy the lowest rung of the ladder; they remain within the classroom and teach full-time. Classroom teachers may be younger teachers who are not yet ready to take on additional roles or opportunities. Or they may be experienced teachers who, for whatever reason, have decided that they do not wish to take on new mentorship, curriculum development or leadership roles. Roughly 60% of teachers within Singapore’s schools are on this rung of the ladder.

Within the classroom teacher rung, there are five salary levels: General Education Officer 1-5. GEO1 teachers start at SIN\$37,200 (US\$28,239) annually, and are eligible for performance-based bonuses, as are all teachers. Moving up to higher salary levels within the Classroom Teacher rung is contingent on satisfactory evaluations and typically results in pay increases of about 10 percent.

Once Classroom Teachers decide that they are ready to take on additional responsibilities, they will have a conversation with their supervising officer about choosing one of the three career ladder tracks. Once their supervisor decides they are ready (usually after five years on the job at the earliest, but it can be sooner for those with demonstrated potential), they will move to the next level of the ladder.

Teaching Track

The teaching track is designed to cultivate experts in pedagogy who remain in the classroom and mentor younger teachers and teachers who are looking for additional help. Roughly 15 percent of the teachers in schools are on the teaching track.

- *Senior Teachers* serve as the mentors for all first- and second-year teachers (all of whom participate in induction programs), supervise teachers-in-training in practicums, and occasionally lead workshops and professional development for their colleagues. Roughly 20 percent of Senior Teachers’ teaching responsibility is offloaded to enable them to take on these responsibilities.

- *Lead Teachers* build capacity of Senior Teachers in content knowledge, pedagogy, and assessment, and develop their schools into strong Professional Learning Communities; they also share their subject expertise with teachers in other schools within their cluster to strengthen the teaching profession. Roughly 33 percent of Lead Teachers' teaching responsibility is offloaded to enable them to take these responsibilities.
- *Master Teachers* are "teachers of teachers" who mentor other teachers so they reach professional excellence and are highly effective. About 80 percent of their work is attached to the Ministry, as they are primary staff of the professional development hub the Academy of Singapore Teachers, where they lead professional development and drive innovations in pedagogy throughout the nation. But their responsibilities also include teaching classes in order to keep them connected to the classroom. There are only roughly 70 Master Teachers out of 33,000 educators in the Singapore system.
- *Principal Master Teachers* are the chief pedagogical experts for their subjects at the national level. Similar to Master Teachers, Principal Master Teachers are responsible for teaching master-classes, leading their colleagues' professional development, driving curricular innovation and leading pedagogical research and innovation, and they are also attached to a school to teach one class weekly. There are only 20 Principal Master Teachers in the system, and they form the leadership of the Academy of Singapore Teachers.

Once classroom teachers are promoted to the Teaching Track, they will see pay raises of approximately 20 percent. They are placed on a new salary scale, called the Senior Education Officer scale, which has three levels, each of which sees pay raises of about 15-20 percent. Principal Master Teachers max out at the top of the Senior Education Officer scale and are paid the same as school principals.

Leadership Track

The Leadership Track provides another pathway forward for teachers with leadership potential, who are identified early and groomed for leadership positions. Roughly 25 percent of educators within Singapore's schools are on this track.

- *Subject Head and Level Heads* observe and coach new teachers and participate in formal evaluations. Subject Heads are the experts in their subject and organize all the other teachers of that subject (for example, Biology), and Level Heads serve as the coordinator for a given year (for example, the Sixth Grade). Roughly 20 percent of their teaching responsibilities are offloaded for these tasks.
- *Heads of Department* coach and develop teachers in subject areas; assist principals in school-wide administration; and set the priorities for staff development under their charge. Roughly 33 percent of their teaching responsibilities are offloaded for these tasks.

- There are two *Vice Principals* in every school: a Vice Principal for Education and a Vice Principal for Administration. Vice Principals for Education oversee all curriculum-related areas of the school and lead the EPMS evaluations for all teaching staff. Vice Principals for Administration oversee all non-curriculum areas and lead a team of Executive and Administrative staff.
- *Principals* lead and inspire teachers to provide students with a holistic education in addition to working with parents and the community. Principals are systematically rotated so schools are infused with fresh perspectives and experienced principals can share best practices in different schools.
- After many years of successfully leading schools, principals may be promoted to roles such as *Cluster Superintendents; Deputy Directors*, who lead roughly 40 sub-departments within the Ministry, and the *Director-General of Education*, which is the highest career civil service position in education and leads the entire system. These officials are paid on a separate “Super Scale” to determine their salary.

Specialist Track

Teachers who wish to become researchers contributing to the creation of new subject matter knowledge within the teaching profession may elect to join the Specialist Track. Unlike other tracks, members of this track do not teach within schools, but instead serve in the Ministry of Education and at the National Institute of Education (the nation’s sole teacher preparation provider). Specialists are developed to be experts in their fields and are expected to produce scholarship in their fields much as professors would. The various levels of the Specialist Track are less differentiated in function than other tracks of the career ladder, and members of the track advance on the basis of the quality of their research and contributions to the field. They take on more supervisory authority for increasingly more complex studies as they advance. Unlike the other tracks, specialists are expected to have, or be in the process of pursuing, a doctorate. There are only roughly 200 specialists within the Singapore system out of 33,000 employees total (less than 1 percent).

Educator Career Ladders in U.S. States and Districts

There is no nationwide career ladder in the United States, and few statewide systems. A few states, such as New York, have a statewide framework for career ladders that districts can adapt as needed. For the most part, where career ladder systems exist, they are developed at the district level. A number of the most well-developed district and state systems are profiled below.

Unlike the top performing countries, where annual turnover is minimal, teacher attrition is a persistent and well-documented problem in the United States. Reasons suggested for this include poor pay, adverse working conditions and a lack of opportunity for new responsibility and career advancement – all features that a career ladder system could address. The attrition rate for selected jurisdictions is summarized below.

Figure 5. Teacher Attrition in States with State or District Career Ladders (2016)

Iowa	7%
Maryland	7%
Massachusetts	3%
New York	8.2%
U.S. Average	7.7%

Iowa

Iowa may have the most developed state teacher career ladder system in the U.S. The Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System provides teachers with opportunities for leadership development and higher pay through additional responsibilities, and it fosters collaboration between teachers so they can learn from each other. The 2013 legislation that created the statewide framework provides districts with three options to design their own local teacher leadership and compensation model – the teacher career pathway model, the instructional coach model, or a comparable plan model. All local plans must: 1) offer a minimum salary of \$33,500; 2) provide coaching, mentoring, and opportunities for new teachers to observe expert instructional practice; 3) provide differentiated, multiple, and meaningful teacher leadership roles; 4) use a rigorous selection process for leadership roles; and 5) offer professional development aligned with the state’s Professional Development Model. The system allows districts to customize the teacher career pathways model or the instructional coach model to meet their needs.

The teacher career pathways model includes initial/beginning teacher, career teacher, model teacher, mentor teacher and lead teacher positions. The instructional coach model is similar, with positions for initial/beginning teacher, career teacher, and model teacher, but it adds additional positions for instructional coach and curriculum and

professional development leader. Model teacher, mentor teacher and lead teacher assignments last for one year but teachers can reapply for these roles annually. Therefore, these roles do not offer permanent increases in salary, but instead one-time stipends that can be renewed. Instructional coach and curriculum and professional development leader positions are not limited to one year but are subject to annual reviews. Review Councils of teachers and administrators appointed by each school board are responsible for reviewing applications for teacher leadership roles and making recommendations on them to the superintendent.

In 2016, the minimum salary level for new teachers was raised to \$35,000. A scale for minimum annual stipends for additional responsibilities was also set: model teachers are paid an additional \$2,000; mentor teachers are paid an additional \$5,000; and lead teachers are paid an additional \$10,000.

State Department of Education guidance for districts specifies that at least 10 percent of teachers should be model teachers, at least 10 percent of teachers should be mentor teachers and at least 5 percent of teachers should be lead teachers. Mentor teachers have a reduced teaching load – with a maximum teaching load of 75 percent – to allow time to mentor other teachers. Lead teachers also have a reduced teaching load – with a maximum teaching load of 50 percent – to allow time for activities such as planning and delivering professional development; facilitating an instructional leadership team; mentoring other teachers; or participating in the evaluation of student teachers. These teachers are also expected to work additional contract days (up to 15 additional days per year) to meet their responsibilities, which are covered in their stipends.

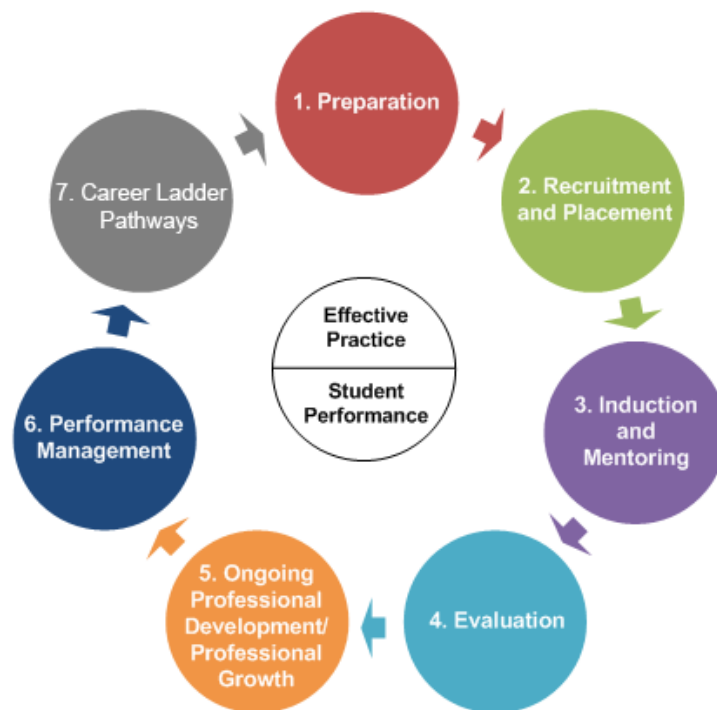
Participation by school districts is voluntary but all districts are currently participating. There are nearly 10,000 teachers in teacher leadership roles across the state.

New York State

From 2012 to 2015, New York State awarded \$83 million to LEAs through the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness competitive grant program. This program was part of the state's Race to the Top initiative. LEAs used these funds to develop a coherent system of support for educators based on the components of the New York State Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Continuum (see Figure 6). The second and third rounds of the grant program (2013-15) specifically required districts to develop, implement and/or enhance a career ladder. Career ladders were required to have a minimum of three levels – novice, professional and leader – with specific roles

and responsibilities. LEAs could add compensation incentives aligned to these levels, if they chose to.

Figure 6: The Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Continuum



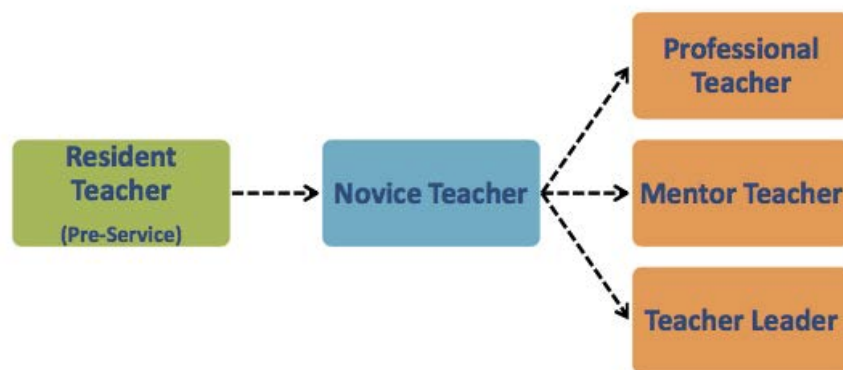
Source: EngageNY

The Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) program awarded grants to 221 of 982 LEAs, all 221 of which implemented career ladders. The grant program ended in 2015, but the state has continued to expand career ladders across the state by developing a Framework for Career Ladder Pathways and providing technical support and resources to LEAs who choose to implement it. The Framework establishes key expectations, such as the five talent management challenges that career ladders should address, but not a career ladder structure. LEAs have the flexibility to develop career ladders based on their unique needs. The state provides career ladder development tools for districts, including a sample career ladder, based on best practices and research from the STLE grant program. The Department of Education does not mandate titles of

career ladder levels or roles and responsibilities of positions, and districts are not required to use the sample career ladder that the state provides. Many districts incorporate many of its features.

The sample career ladder is below:

Figure 7: Sample Teacher Career Ladder



Source: EngageNY

The roles in this sample career ladder are described:

- Resident Teacher (pre-service teacher): Enrolled in a preparation program and completing an internship, field service opportunities and student teaching with a Mentor Teacher. Eligible for advancement to Novice Teacher after earning a teaching degree and demonstrating on-the-job effectiveness in the district's resident teacher program.
- Novice Teacher: Classroom teacher who has completed the district's resident teacher program. Eligible for advancement to Professional Teacher after four years of experience (including four years of formal mentoring with a content-specific Mentor Teacher) and receiving at least three Effective or Highly Effective ratings in three years, as well as tenure.
- Professional Teacher: A full-time, tenured teacher. Eligible to take on leadership roles at the school or district level or to apply for district-approved fellowship or grant opportunities. Eligible to serve as Mentor Teacher after five years of experience and at least three Effective or Highly Effective ratings in three years.
- Mentor Teacher: Responsible for supporting Resident and Novice teachers as well as struggling Professional Teachers and providing model classrooms for demonstration lessons. Eligible to serve as Teacher Leader after five years of experience and four Effective or Highly Effective ratings in four years.

- Teacher Leader: Responsibilities vary based on strengths and LEA needs but may include creating professional development opportunities and leading professional learning communities or the district's resident teacher program. Promising candidates may be encouraged to pursue administrator certification.

Compensation for these sample roles would be based on contracts negotiated with local teachers' unions, with the potential for specific additional awards in hard-to-staff subject areas or high-need schools.

The state also provides six recommended steps that an LEA should take to design and implement customized career ladder pathways:

- 1) Conduct a needs analysis to identify student achievement and talent management needs.
- 2) Create design principles that will guide the development of career ladder pathways, including the roles and responsibilities of educator leaders.
- 3) Develop communication and engagement strategies to build buy-in.
- 4) Provide ongoing training and support throughout implementation.
- 5) Improve funding and sustainability.
- 6) Continuously evaluate the program based on measurable goals and outcomes.

The state has also published [profiles of 15 LEAs](#) that have implemented career ladder pathways. LEAs are encouraged to learn from other LEAs that share their goals, needs or other characteristics, such as geography or student enrollment.

Washington, DC

The District of Columbia has one of the most advanced career ladder system at the district level in the U.S. D.C.'s Leadership Initiative for Teachers (LIFT) is a five-level career ladder that provides effective teachers with opportunities to develop their expertise, receive recognition and higher compensation, and advance in their leadership and careers through new and increased responsibilities. The five levels are: New Teacher, Established Teacher, Advanced Teacher, Distinguished Teacher and Expert Teacher.

New Teachers typically have 0-1 years of experience. Established Teachers typically have 2+ years of experience and can start taking on leadership roles within their school or the district, such as Curriculum Writer or Teacher Selection Ambassador. Teachers at both of these stages receive normal compensation.

Advanced Teachers take on leadership roles and have been rated effective for several years. They are eligible for a base salary increase if they work in high-poverty schools, which more than three-quarters of DC Public Schools teachers do. This increase is the equivalent of what they would be paid for two additional years of service.

Distinguished Teachers have a demonstrable record of exemplary student achievement and a deep understanding of best instructional practices, in addition to serving as models to new and less experienced teachers. If they work in high-poverty schools, they are eligible for a base salary increase which is the equivalent of five additional years of service and they can be paid at the rate of teachers with master’s degree.

Expert Teachers are master teachers who have a demonstrable record of exceptional student learning gains over many years, have served in various leadership roles and mentor less experienced teachers. If they work in high-poverty schools, they are eligible for a base salary increase which is the equivalent of five additional years of service and can be paid at the rate of teachers with PhDs.

Advanced, Distinguished and Expert teachers are eligible to advance to positions of Assistant Principal, Early Childhood Education Instructional Specialist, Instructional Coach, Master Educator and Principal. To help teachers at different LIFT stages pursue leadership opportunities, DCPS provides a [catalog](#) of school- and district-based opportunities categorized by theme (e.g., Coaching and Mentoring Opportunities, Education Policy Opportunities, etc.). Required experience and LIFT stage, compensation and/or release time vary by leadership opportunity and are stated clearly in the catalog.

Requirements for moving up the LIFT ladder are illustrated below.

Figure 8: Standards to Advance Up the LIFT Ladder



Source: DCPS, 2015

Advancement along the LIFT ladder is determined by a teacher's annual rating on the district's evaluation system, known as IMPACT, and makes teachers eligible for increasing opportunities and benefits, such as additional compensation, reduced IMPACT observations, and various leadership opportunities. The details of IMPACT evaluation depend on teachers' roles. For example, a teacher of students in grade four or higher for whom value-added data (based on PARCC standardized test scores) and student survey data is available would be assessed based on the following criteria:

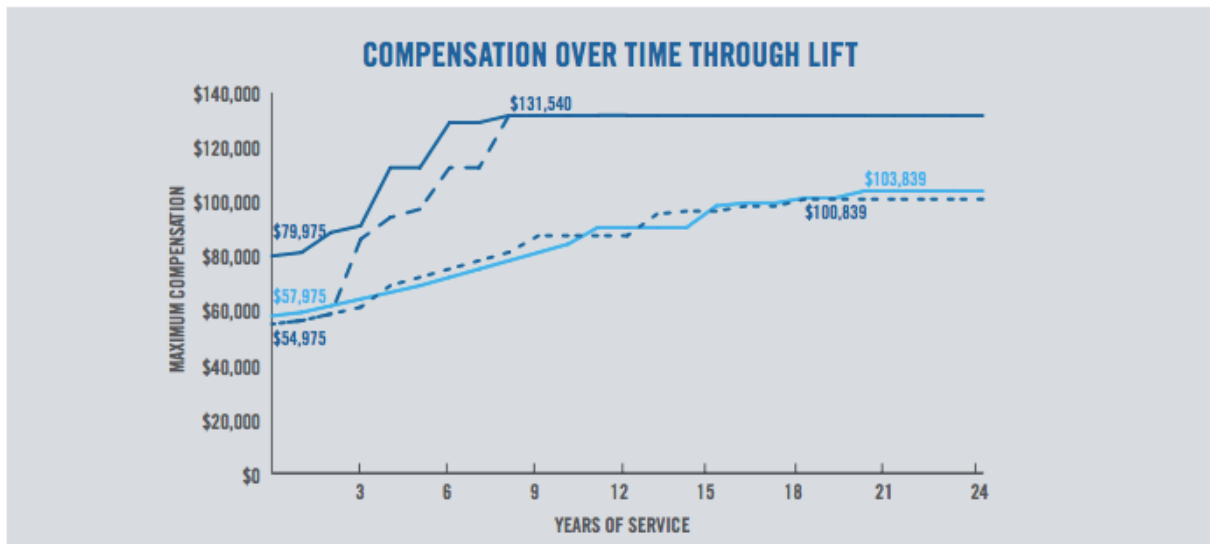
- Essential Practices (30 percent): A measure of instructional expertise, as scored on a rubric during classroom observations by school administrators
- Student Achievement Data (50 percent): Includes Individual Value-Added Student Achievement Data (35 percent) based on PARCC scores and Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (15 percent) based on assessments other than PARCC, which must be aligned to appropriate content standards and approved by school administration
- Student Surveys of Practice (10 percent): A measure of instructional culture, as assessed by students
- Commitment to the School Community (10 percent): A measure of the extent to which teachers support and collaborate with the school community. Includes support of school initiatives, partnership with students' families and instructional collaboration with colleagues.
- Core Professionalism: Scored separately from other components. Includes basic elements of professionalism such as attendance and following school policies and procedures.

Teachers only advance to the next stage of the ladder when they earn the requisite IMPACT ratings, and they never move backwards. Teachers with the necessary ratings advance automatically.

In addition to salary increases associated with the career ladder, DCPS has a [performance-based pay system that offers teachers annual bonuses](#). In 2017-18, teachers can receive a total possible annual bonus of \$25,000 if they: teach a grade/subject in which half of their IMPACT assessment comes from student achievement data, receive a Highly Effective IMPACT rating and work in a high-poverty school that is also a priority (low-performing) school. Even teachers not eligible for the maximum annual bonus can earn substantially more over time through LIFT. The graph below shows compensation over time for four hypothetical teachers with master's degrees. The graph assumes that teachers 1 and 2 both earn the maximum annual bonus of \$25,000.

Figure 9: Compensation Over Time Through LIFT

- **Teacher 1:** A teacher who consistently earns Highly Effective ratings at a high-poverty school*
- - - **Teacher 3:** A teacher who consistently earns Effective ratings at a high-poverty school
- - **Teacher 2:** A teacher who earns three years of Effective ratings before earning Highly Effective ratings at a high-poverty school*
- **Teacher 4:** A teacher who consistently earns Highly Effective ratings at a low-poverty school



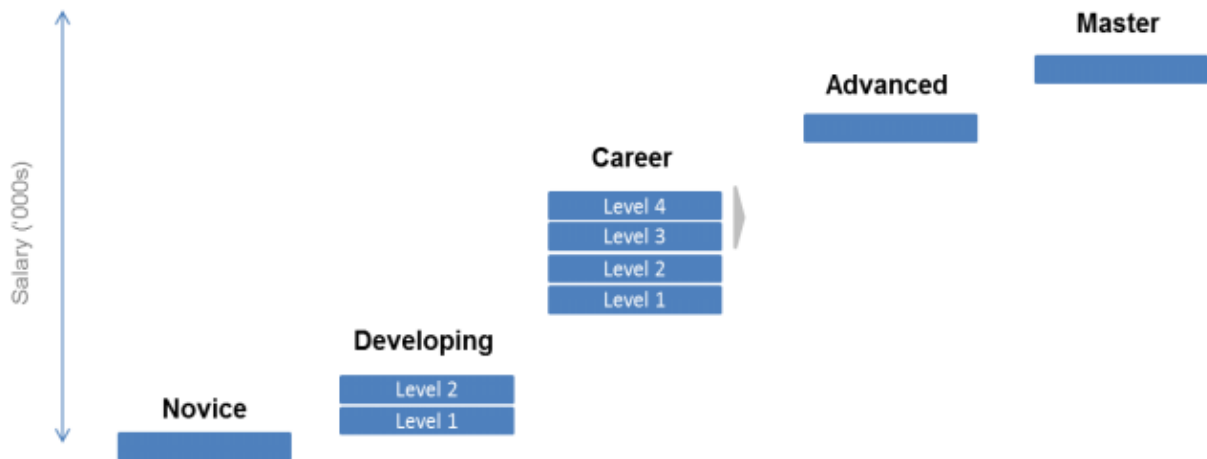
Source: NCTQ

By the end of their careers, each teacher’s salary exceeds \$100,000 per year.

Lawrence, MA

The Lawrence, MA Public School district implemented the first pilot [career ladder](#) in the state of Massachusetts in 2013. Lawrence Public Schools serve more than 13,000 students, the majority of whom are economically disadvantaged. In 2012, they were “taken over” by the state after being designated chronically underperforming. The career ladder was part of a series of reforms implemented after the district was taken over.

Figure 10: Lawrence Public Schools Career Ladder



Source: MA AFT

The district ladder has the following five levels:

- Novice teachers, with an entry level salary of \$44,000
- Developing teachers, with at least one year of experience and salary ranging from \$46,000-\$47,500
- Career teachers, with at least 3 years of experience and salary ranging from \$55,000 - \$68,500.
- Advanced teachers who serve as school-wide leaders and are expected to open their classrooms to others to observe. These teachers earn \$75,000.
- Master teachers who are expected to serve as models to teachers across the district and assume additional leadership roles as requested by the district. These teachers earn \$85,000.

The district negotiated the salary scale that matches levels on the ladder. The scale was designed to offer substantial increases within a teacher's first five years of teaching to promote the retention of teachers whose effectiveness has increased during this critical period.

Teachers advance up this ladder through either their annual evaluation or a portfolio process, depending on their level. Novice, Developing and Career teachers advance through their end-of-year evaluations whereas Advanced and Master teachers are assessed through a portfolio process.

Teacher evaluations in Lawrence are based on implementation of the state Educator Evaluation Framework, which incorporates evidence from classroom observations; multiple measures of student learning (e.g., classroom assessments, student progress on learning goals set by the teacher and evaluator and statewide growth measures, like MCAS Student Growth Percentile); and additional evidence like feedback from students, staff and parents. Teachers advance from Novice to Developing with a rating higher than Unsatisfactory. To move to the Career level, teachers must have a Proficient or Exemplary rating. Principals have the option to recommend outstanding teachers for early movement to the Career level.

There are four sub-levels within the Career level, and teachers in the top two sub-levels can apply for the Advanced or Master levels. Teachers applying for advancement to these levels submit portfolios, which can include recommendations (e.g., from parents, peers and students), student growth data and evidence of effective teaching. The superintendent has final approval over promotion to these levels. The district's collective bargaining agreement specifies that about 20 percent of teachers in the district should be either Advanced or Master.

The Lawrence Teachers Union signed a new contract in March of 2018. While the full details of this contract are not yet publicly available, it contains a \$1,000 per year (for the next three years) pay increase for teachers with up to ten years of experience that raises the starting salary to \$45,000. It also includes a \$1,500 per year increase for

teachers with more than 10 years of experience that raises the top of the salary scale to \$86,000.

Baltimore City, MD

The 2010 contract between the Baltimore Teachers Union and Baltimore City Schools established differentiated career pathways within a four-level pilot career ladder system. The career pathways levels are Standard, Professional, Model and Lead.

Figure 11: Baltimore City Career Pathways



Source: Baltimore City Schools

Within each level are intervals, and teacher pay increases at each interval. Teachers can move up intervals by earning Achievement Units (AUs) through activities such as professional development; contributions to student learning, colleagues, or the school or district; or eligible coursework. Teachers can also earn AUs for high ratings on their annual evaluations. The current Career Pathway Salary Schedule is:

- Standard teachers: \$48,914-\$55,052
- Professional teachers: \$61,109-\$86,557
- Model teachers: \$89,242-95,517
- Lead teachers: \$97,168-\$103,861

Teachers move from the Standard to the Professional level simply by accruing AUs or by gaining approval from a Professional Peer Review Committee (PPRC). Teachers who want to advance to Model or Lead teacher can only do that with the approval of the PPRC. The PPRC is composed of current Model teachers. Teachers apply to the

President of the Baltimore Teachers' Union to serve on a PPRC and receive training on how to evaluate candidates. During review by a PPRC, candidates present evidence of excellence in four domains: Learner Achievement, Instruction/Support Services, Developing as a Professional and Leadership. Candidates create an online profile, which includes artifacts relevant to the areas above and a video of a lesson. These profiles are assessed by the Committee based on a rubric.

Promotion to Lead teacher depends on being chosen by a school principal for an available position. Applicants must submit letters of recommendation and complete a performance task. The PPRC places eligible teachers into a pool of Lead teacher candidates, who must then be chosen by principals. Lead teachers continue to teach up to one-quarter of the time and spend the rest of their time working with the school's leadership team in one or more School Investment Areas: Instructional Strategy, Coaching, Student Interventions, Partnerships or Blended Learning.

Montgomery County, MD

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Teacher Professional Growth System (TPGS) integrates teacher evaluation with continuing professional development. While the TPGS is not a formal career ladder, it provides several opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles providing instructional support to their peers.

There are six essential elements of the TPGS:

1. Standards for teacher performance based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, with performance criteria and examples
2. Training for evaluators and teachers on the language used in TPGS as well as the skills of analysis and critique needed to use the system effectively
3. A professional growth cycle that integrates formal evaluation into a process of professional growth and reflection
4. Formal evaluation with qualitative feedback
5. A Peer Assistance and Review program in which Consulting Teachers provide instructional support to beginning teachers as well as experienced teachers who are struggling
6. Professional development structured around a collaborative learning culture

All teachers are evaluated through TPGS, with frequency depending on experience and need. Probationary teachers – those in their first three years of experience in Montgomery County who have not previously earned tenure in Maryland – are formally evaluated each year. Teachers who have earned tenure are formally evaluated

less frequently, on a three- to five-year cycle, and devote more time to professional development. (Teachers still receive at least two informal observations during years that they are not formally evaluated.) During non-evaluation years, known as professional development years, tenured teachers develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP) that sets goals for continuous improvement and establishes a clear plan for professional development activities. As part of developing a PDP, teachers identify a support team of colleagues from whom they will seek assistance and feedback in implementing their PDP.

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program, part of TPGS, provides targeted support for two groups: new teachers and teachers who are struggling. Struggling teachers are those who have received a Below Standard formal evaluation rating. In the PAR program, Consulting Teachers (CTs) (described below) work directly with teachers to provide instructional support. They report on teachers' progress to the PAR Panel, a group of eight teachers and eight principals who have been appointed by the superintendent on union recommendation. These reports are used to help determine whether the teacher should continue to receive support in the PAR Program, as well as future employment status of those teachers.

Consulting Teacher (CT) is one of several leadership opportunities for teachers to provide direct instructional support to their peers through the TPGS. CTs apply for the position and go through a rigorous selection process. They must have at least five years of successful teaching experience, experience modeling teaching behavior to adult learners and evidence of instructional leadership. Once selected, they receive training through two leadership courses, Observing and Analyzing Teaching 1 (39 hours) and 2 (36 hours). During the school year, they provide teaching strategies and resources, lesson planning assistance, demonstration lessons and team teaching experiences. They also conduct observations. For 20 days during the summer, CTs plan and deliver new teacher training and work with the PAR Panel. CT is a five-year commitment with three years as a CT, released from normal teaching duties, and two years back in a classroom teaching position. CTs are not part of any one school's staff as they work across the district. There are currently 28 CTs in Montgomery County with about 18 to 20 teachers from different schools on each CT's caseload.

Unlike CTs, Staff Development Teachers (SDTs) and Mentors are both school-based positions. Staff Development Teachers are instructional leaders who work toward creating a culture of professional learning in each school. Like CTs, SDTs must apply for the position and go through a selection process. They must have at least five years of teaching experience (ideally three in MCPS), a Meets Standard rating on the most recent teacher evaluation, experience modeling teaching behavior to adult learners, evidence of instructional leadership, and successful completion of one of two possible training courses: Studying Skillful Teaching or Observation and Analysis of Teaching. They facilitate professional development opportunities; support the development,

implementation and monitoring of the school improvement plan; and support job-embedded staff development (e.g., by coordinating support from substitute teachers so that teachers can work collaboratively and observe each other during the school day). They also review PDPs, along with the principal or assistant principal, and help individual teachers monitor their professional growth needs.

Mentors are assigned to teachers who are in their first three years at MCPS but not new to the profession. (Teachers who are new to the profession are assigned CTs.) Mentors must be “tenured, exemplary, veteran” teachers who have received training in mentoring, which is provided through continuing professional development courses (Mentoring for All: Strategies, Activities and Assessments and Mentoring: Mapping the Journey) or mentor forums. Mentors provide support to their mentees for at least 12 hours per semester and receive stipends of \$300-400 per semester, depending on the training they complete. Unlike CTs and SDTs, Mentors maintain their normal teaching responsibilities. Each Mentor can have a maximum of two mentees, with a one-to-one ratio preferred.

Whether teachers apply or are handpicked for these additional responsibilities varies depending on the role. There are separate job descriptions and application procedures for CT and SDT positions, maintained centrally at the district, whereas Mentors are selected within schools by their principals.