

# Accomplished Teaching Guide for School Leaders of NT3 Pilot Schools

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## How To Establish Accomplished Teaching as the Standard for Professional Practice in Your School

In the Network to Transform Teaching (NT3), education leaders from ten states have collaborated to think together about how to ensure every student can experience accomplished teaching every day.

As we look back on what we've learned over the course of the past six years, our thinking about the **unique role of school leaders** in this work has evolved. We used to think that we could organize network members to increase the number of NBCTs and move them into instructional leadership roles. Now we understand that these are just two of many strategies and that school leaders play a central role in many of them. When school leaders understand how the standard of teaching that NBCTs represent (Accomplished Teaching) is aligned with what they want throughout their schools, they become eager to promote it. The primary purpose of this document is to share Network learning on how they might do that.

**This document contains resources to help school leaders know where to start to promote Accomplished Teaching as a standard of professional practice in their schools.**

- [Background](#): introduction to 3 essential phases of the work and 3 key audiences;
- [Map to Accomplished Teaching](#): potential action steps in each phase for each audience, linked to an online collection of resources; and
- [Conversation Guides](#): guiding questions to support school leaders to explore the Map to Accomplished Teaching with their teams.



## BACKGROUND

All schools have a “standard of care.” Not all schools cultivate that deliberately. Too often teachers have to seek out their own clues to learn what kind of teaching is expected of them in their context and families learn what they can expect from their school only after years of being in it. Unfortunately, without deliberate attention to establishing and communicating a high bar for the standard of care in a school, the standard is too often set at the lowest common denominator. Teachers know what is “good enough,” but they are not necessarily cognizant of or feeling accountable to meeting a higher standard.

School leaders who believe every student deserves accomplished teaching every day, must be committed to making that a reality. But how?

**Raising the “standard of care” throughout a school to the level of the NBPTS Accomplished Teaching Standard requires at least three levels of engagement by distinct members of the school system.**

1. All **teachers**, **school leaders**, and **district/state partners** are engaged in **Understanding Accomplished Teaching**.
2. **School leaders** and **district/ state partners** are making key decisions that support **Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching**.
3. **District/ state partners** play a primary role in **Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching**.

While all leaders have important contributions to make to all phases of the work, the primary role varies by phase.

	Who must be engaged?		
	<b>Teachers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-service teachers</li> <li>• Novice teachers</li> <li>• Career teachers</li> <li>• Classroom volunteers</li> </ul>	<b>School Leaders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher leaders: coaches, mentors, team leaders, etc.</li> <li>• Principals &amp; Aps</li> <li>• Instructional improvement partners: higher ed institutions, external PD providers, etc.</li> </ul>	<b>District Leaders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Leaders: union leaders, peer evaluators, content area leaders, etc.</li> <li>• Superintendent &amp; Assistants/ Deputies</li> <li>• School Committee members</li> <li>• Department leaders</li> <li>• Instructional improvement partners: higher ed institutions, non-profit partners, trainers, vendors, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding Accomplished Teaching</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>

<b>Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>P</b>
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P= Primary Role; S= Supporting Role

*What might these three phases look like?*

**1. Understanding Accomplished Teaching**

Where Accomplished Teaching is the standard of care, everyone—teachers, school leaders (including teacher leaders, coaches, school administrators, etc.) and district/ state partners (including local and state education agencies, IHEs, unions, non-profit partners, etc.)— deeply understands what “Accomplished Teaching” represents and why it is important. To achieve this, they have had opportunities to explore how it is similar and different from what they had come to believe about good teaching. As educators recognize ways in which this new “Accomplished Teaching” standard represents the higher standard their students deserve and the ways it will lead to better outcomes for students, they become willing to invest further in Accomplished Teaching. Individual teachers enter into the National Board Certification process to challenge themselves to meet this standard. School leaders and district/state partners take steps to ensure that their schools are designed for Accomplished Teaching to be the norm.

**2. Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching**

Where Accomplished Teaching is the standard of care, school leaders and district/state partners take action to create a culture of accomplished teaching. By virtue of their position, they are able to embed the language and key ideas from the Five Core Propositions and Standards documents into shared statements about what we value (e.g. team goals, school vision, district improvement plans, state standards, etc.) and into professional growth routines that shape communication about teaching and learning. These include goal-setting processes, observation and feedback cycles, professional development workshops, and more. While teachers can play powerful formal and informal roles in influencing and expanding the culture of Accomplished Teaching, their actions are shaped, enabled and possibly accelerated by initial actions of school and district leaders. And, as the language and expectations around teaching and learning are raised up, district/ state partners align their efforts to institutionalize Accomplished Teaching as the standard of practice.

**3. Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching.**

Where Accomplished Teaching is the standard of care, district/ state partners—including local and state ed agencies, IHEs, unions and non-profit partners—establish structures that support accomplished teaching. From their vantage point as policy leaders, they are in a unique position to shape conditions that foster or limit possibilities. They create pre-service standards, hiring criteria, and mentoring policies which influence teachers’ expectations of what “standard of care” expected of them, and they use their position to influence human resource policies that motivate teachers to strengthen their professional practice and that determine whether teachers have time and effective support to do so. They also have a large voice in whether and how teachers’ expertise is identified and utilized as a resource for growing more Accomplished Teaching.

They can galvanize resources for teachers to develop as leaders and position them to influence their colleagues' instruction in ways school leaders and individual teachers cannot. While teacher leaders and other school-level leaders can advocate for such structural changes, district (and/or state) partners make these policy changes happen. With these district and state-level actions in place, teachers and school leaders are in a position to make an even bigger difference toward expanding Accomplished Teaching.

## MAP TO ACCOMPLISHED TEACHING

Establishing Accomplished Teaching as the standard for professional practice throughout a school requires attention to three audiences and three distinct phases of work.

*Note: The ideas below are presented in a grid for ease of use and reference. However, combining groups of leaders across classroom, school and district levels in learning together is ideal.*

	Teachers	School Leaders	District Leaders
	<b>Phase 1: <a href="#">Understanding Accomplished Teaching</a></b> Say YES to at least 2 in each column before moving to Phase 2		
<b>Start with the WHY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have teachers in our school spent time thinking together about what is expected of them as <b>members of the teaching profession</b>?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we understand how the AT Standard might help teachers to <b>meet school priorities and what is expected of us</b> as faculty members of this school?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do district leaders understand how the AT Standard can help teachers to <b>meet what is expected of us by the district and state</b>?</li> </ul>
<b>Learn what AT is</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do teachers have a sense of what lies <b>beyond basic, entry-level standards</b> for our profession?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we believe it is important to make the language of inquiry cycles, such as in the AAT, a part of <b>how we talk about effective teaching</b>?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do district department leaders <b>know who the NBCTs are</b> in their subject areas?</li> <li>Do they know what these NBCTs know and are able to do? That is, have district department leaders studied the</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do teachers have ways to see <b>models of the AT Standard</b> in action?</li> <li>Do teachers know how they can <b>measure their own practice</b> up to the AT Standard?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have we <b>calibrated conceptions of the AT Standard</b> with the other instructional leaders in the building?</li> <li>Have we communicated <b>why we, as a school leaders, value the AT Standard</b>?</li> </ul>	<p><b>subject-specific Standards documents</b> in their areas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are key instructional improvement <b>partners able to explain how their services align</b> with and/or support the AT Standard?</li> </ul>
	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>School Leaders</b>	<b>District Leaders</b>
<p><b>Phase 2: <a href="#">Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching</a></b></p> <p><i>Say YES to at least 4 total (and at least 1 in each column) before moving to Phase 3</i></p>			
<b>Ensure Visible Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do teachers <b>use the language (terminology) of AT</b> in conversations with each other, in PD and in coaching conversations? And encourage each other to do so?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are we using the AT Standard to <b>communicate</b> about teaching and learning, including in <b>school-based professional learning</b> experiences?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do district leaders <b>communicate</b> (in word and deed) that achieving the AT Standard is valued and/or expected, for example by <b>embedding the AT Standard in district routines</b> that influence the quality of teaching, (e.g. school/district improvement planning expectations, school report cards, HR policies, etc.), including pre-service?</li> </ul>
<b>Create Conditions</b>	<p><i>Note: Teachers' abilities to be effective in these ways depend upon the culture created by other leaders.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have we provided the <b>cultural conditions required for teachers</b> to meet the AT Standard, (e.g. trust,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have district leaders provided the <b>cultural conditions required for principals</b> to feel they can support the AT standard, (e.g. district-level trust,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do teachers have <b>relationships and mindsets</b> needed to be willing and able to encourage, challenge and support each other to practice at the level of the AT standard?</li> </ul>	safety, collaborative climate, reflection, etc.)?	transparency, participatory decision-making, etc.)
	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>School Leaders</b>	<b>District Leaders</b>
	<b>Phase 3: <a href="#">Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching</a></b>		
	<p><i>Note: Teachers' abilities to be effective in these ways depend upon the structures created by other leaders.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are structures in place that encourage teachers to <b>support and challenge each other to pursue board certification</b>?</li> </ul>	<p><i>Note: School Leaders' abilities to be effective in these ways depend upon the structures created by other leaders.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we allocate resources (time, space, funding, materials, etc.) for structured <b>school-based conversations about Accomplished Teaching</b>?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have district leaders created <b>policies and extrinsic incentives for achieving the AT Standard</b> (National Board Certification)?</li> <li>Have district leaders created <b>support systems for teachers to access, complete and achieve</b> the AT Standard (National Board Certification)?</li> <li>Are district leaders <b>creating roles that position NBCTs to influence their peers</b>?</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are district leaders <b>supporting Accomplished Teachers to develop their leadership skills?</b></li></ul>
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## CONVERSATION GUIDES

The following pages support users to explore the Map to Accomplished Teaching.

Every school context is unique and conversations among stakeholders are helpful to determine if they are ready to move forward to the next phase of the work. These guides can help.

### Conversation Guide for Teachers/ Classrooms

Intended audience:

- Pre-service teachers
- Novice teachers
- Career teachers
- Classroom volunteers

#### Teachers/ Classrooms-- Conversation A: Understanding Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Which questions are most important for you to be able to answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Have teachers in our school spent time thinking together about what is expected of them as **members of the teaching profession**?
  - What conclusions have they drawn? What is the source of these expectations? Intrinsic? Teacher leaders? School leaders? District leaders?
- Do teachers have a sense of what lies **beyond basic, entry-level standards** for our profession?
  - What are the resources they use to help define this?
- Do teachers have ways to see **models of the AT Standard** in action?
  - Do teachers know about these models?
  - How and how often are they used?
- Do teachers know how they can **measure their own practice** up to the AT Standard?
  - Do they do this?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation around the WHY and WHAT of AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?



**Action Steps:**

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Based on what we know of our context, are certain questions more important than others?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to establish the foundation of understanding Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to measure understanding of Accomplished Teaching throughout our schools?

**Teachers/ Classrooms-- Conversation B: Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching**

- Do we see evidence of visible support of the work?
- Do teachers use the language (terminology) of AT in conversations with each other, in PD and in coaching conversations?
  - Do they encourage each other to do so?
- Are teachers able and willing to encourage, challenge and support each other to practice at the level of the AT standard?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation around visibly supporting and creating conditions to support AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?

**Action Steps:**

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Based on what we know of our context, are certain questions more important than others?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish the Culture of Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to grow a Culture of Accomplished Teaching throughout our school?
- How are we tracking/measuring our success?

## Teachers/ Classrooms-- Conversation C: Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Are teachers willing to pursue/ assume teacher leader roles that support the AT Standard?
- Do teachers challenge each other to pursue board certification?

### **Action Steps:**

- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish Structures for Accomplished Teaching? What is within our span of control? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to develop Structures of Accomplished Teaching throughout our district?

## Conversation Guide for School Leaders/Schools

Intended audience:

- Teacher leaders: coaches, mentors, team leaders, etc.
- Principals & APs
- Instructional improvement partners: higher ed institutions, external PD providers, etc.

### School Leaders/Schools-- Conversation A: Understanding Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Do we understand how the AT Standard might help teachers to **meet school (or departmental) priorities and what is expected of us** as faculty members of this school? Do we believe it is important to make the language of inquiry cycles, such as in the AAT, a part of **how we talk about effective teaching**?
- Have we **calibrated conceptions of the AT Standard** with the other instructional leaders in the building? Have we communicated **why we, as a school leaders, value the AT Standard**?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation and the WHY and WHAT of AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?

#### Action Steps:

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to establish the foundation of understanding Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to measure understanding of Accomplished Teaching throughout our schools?

## School Leaders/Schools-- Conversation B: Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching

- Are we using the Accomplished Teaching Standard to **communicate** what is valued about teaching and learning?
  - How are we doing that?
  - Can we measure our success?
- Are we embedding the Accomplished Teaching Standard in **school-based professional learning** experiences?
  - How are we doing that?
  - Can we measure our success?
- Have we provided the **cultural conditions required for teachers** to meet the Accomplished Teaching Standard, (e.g. trust, safety, collaborative climate, etc.)?
  - How can we measure these?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation around visibly supporting and creating conditions to support AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?

### **Action Steps:**

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish the Culture of Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to grow a Culture of Accomplished Teaching throughout our school?
- How are we tracking/measuring our success?

## School Leaders/Schools-- Conversation C: Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Do we allocate resources (time, space, funding, materials, etc.) for school-based candidate support?
- Do we utilize board certification status as important information in processes such as hiring and assignment to teacher leader roles?

### **Action Steps:**

- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish Structures for Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to develop Structures of Accomplished Teaching throughout our district?
- What will success look like for our district?

## Conversation Guide for District Leaders/ Districts

- Intended audience:
  - Teacher Leaders: union leaders, peer evaluators, content area leaders, etc.
  - Superintendent & Assistants/ Deputies
  - School Committee members
  - Department leaders
  - Instructional improvement partners: higher ed institutions, non-profit partners, trainers, vendors, etc.

### District Leaders/ Districts-- Conversation A: Understanding Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Do district leaders understand how the AT Standard can help teachers to **meet what is expected of us by the district and state**?
- Do district department leaders **know who the NBCTs are** in their subject areas?
- Do they know what these NBCTs know and are able to do? That is, have district department leaders studied the **subject-specific Standards documents** in their areas?
- Are key instructional improvement **partners able to explain how their services align** with and/or support the AT Standard?

#### Action Steps:

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to establish the foundation of understanding Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to measure understanding of Accomplished Teaching throughout our district?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation and the WHY and WHAT of AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?

## District Leaders/ Districts-- Conversation B: Creating a Culture of Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Do district leaders **communicate** (in word and deed) that achieving the AT Standard is valued and/or expected (National Board Certification)?
- Do district leaders **embed the AT Standard in district routines** for influencing the quality of teaching, (e.g. school/district improvement planning expectations, school report cards, HR policies, etc.)?
- Have we provided the **cultural conditions required for principals** to feel they can support the AT standard, (e.g. trust, transparency, participatory decision-making, etc.)?

### Action Steps:

- Do we feel confident we can answer the above questions in the affirmative?
- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish the Culture of Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to grow a Culture of Accomplished Teaching throughout our district?
- Why might it be important to have a solid foundation around visibly supporting and creating conditions to support AT before moving forward? What might happen (what should we be cautious of) if we don't?

## District Leaders/ Districts-- Conversation C: Establishing Structures for Accomplished Teaching

How many of these questions can your team answer in the affirmative? Think about sending out these questions for everyone to answer individually before a group meeting to discuss. Where are you/your team aligned? Not aligned?

- Have district leaders created **extrinsic incentives for achieving the AT Standard** (National Board Certification)?
- Have district leaders created **support systems for teachers to access, complete and achieve** the AT Standard (National Board Certification)?
- Are district leaders **developing Accomplished Teachers as leaders** in order to extend these teachers' impact on others?
- Are district leaders **embedding the AT Standard in pre-service** teacher development?

### **Action Steps:**

- Where did the conversation expose gaps in alignment and/or a lack of understanding?
- Are there specific things we need to do to create and establish Structures for Accomplished Teaching? Who should own those initiatives?
- How will we continue to develop Structures of Accomplished Teaching throughout our district?
- What will success look like for our district?