

I currently teach high school students chemistry. Given my goal of delivering stellar academic results for my students and my institution, I explore novel ways of partnering with my students enabling them to deliver their best academic performance. The novel mechanisms by which I personalize education for my students are primarily driven by how I hypothetically categorize them in terms of potential, and how they best respond to learning challenges.

In my view, most class-rooms comprise of three types of students, they are: (1) *the 'star student'*: always one step ahead of the class and has an insatiable desire to learn more – enough is never enough for such a student – keeping these types of students challenged is always my goal; (2) *the 'will meet expectations student'*: persistently does what is expected, but nothing above and beyond the established expectations – helping these types of students raise their game to the next level is my target; and (3) *'the cannot do student'*: wonders why he / she does not get it, and believes is academically challenged – helping these students realize their full potential is my aspiration. Once, I group the students in my class into the hypothetical categories outlined above, I personalize my method of teaching and the class / home assignments.

Besides using various techniques to enhance the overall learning experience, I partner the students across the various hypothetical categories into collaborative study groups to maximize results for each team. This technique builds a collaborative team environment and helps them leverage each other's strengths on team projects. For the students in the *'star'* category, I keep them challenged by (a) giving them advanced lessons; and (b) special projects to further solidify their learning. For students in the *'will meet expectations'* category, I stretch their output by providing incentives / extra credits for additional assignments. For the students in the *'the cannot do' category*, I am a believer in the 10,000 hours rule as outlined by Malcolm Gladwell in his book *'Outliers'*; hence, I make students in this hypothetical category practice the critical assignments repeatedly until they have mastered the concepts.

As I am the head of my department at school, I collaborate extensively with my peers to achieve stellar academic results for my students. My most significant contribution from a leadership standpoint is assisting my peers understand the hypothetical categorization (as explained above) of the students in my class, and thus helping my peers customize the delivery of education to the students. Additionally, I demonstrate leadership by learning from the experiences of my peers and adopting / testing suggestions, which may further enhance the students learning experience.

I have three long-term goals in the field of education, they are: (1) viewed as a premier educator in the field of chemistry i.e., the results I am able to help my students achieve demonstrate my capabilities as an educator; (2) viewed by the students as a mentor i.e., based on the level of collaboration I am able to achieve with my students, they view me as a mentor as they progress to college and beyond; and lastly (3) the institution views me as a leader, which is demonstrated through my impact for the school and for the students.

The Teacher Leadership Program will help me achieve my long term goals in three specific ways, they are: (1) firstly, the program facilitates interaction with other educators and faculty enabling me to understand the various learning leading practices, and the learning outcomes they drive; secondly, the program enables me to understand the theory behind the various learning practices and potential customizations to achieve desired results; and thirdly, the program will enable me to further enhance my leadership skills.

In conclusion, I welcome the opportunity to be accepted to the program as will help me gain further skills to enhance my goals of a premier educator and an effective leader. Additionally, I would contribute immensely to the learning experience of the classroom.