

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction  
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Interviews with North Dakota Instructional Coaches

- Can you give a brief description of your job responsibilities? What do you do as a coach on a day-to-day basis?  
Co-teaching; small group instruction; work with curriculum (differentiated instruction); help with technology; have teachers pick goals and help them reach them; first year - material management; adaptation of new reading series; correspond with teachers; principal contacted to work with a teacher (modeling and observe and document strengths and weaknesses); team teaching; build rapport; guided reading; team meetings; review data and facilitate progress monitoring; demonstrate lessons – specifically on intensity and differentiated instruction; liaison between teachers and the principal in the area of reading instruction; regular monthly meetings.
- Do you know what funds are used to support your position?  
Program Improvement funds; Title I funds; district funds; Reading First funds.
- What characteristics do you feel are essential for an effective coach?  
Good people skills; outgoing; good leadership skills; solid knowledge of content area; willing to take the initiative; ability to be flexible (job constantly changes); quality background in literacy; lots of experience; lots of training; knowledge of subject area; best practice level; team leader – leadership qualities and experience; willing to be the catalyst; someone who is good at facilitating change; someone good at encouraging teachers, but not demanding or dictatorial; be a facilitator.
- How does your school district evaluate the effectiveness of instructional coaches? For example, how does your job impact student achievement? How is it measured?  
Informal only – what was helpful; what would be more beneficial; feedback and opinions from teachers; haven't looked at data yet; surveys of teachers; a checklist that the school uses – interviews with teachers.
- What is your favorite aspect about being an instructional coach?  
Being able to work with so many teachers – not so isolated; learn so much; relationships you make and build; shine in one area and provide that support; the feeling of accomplishment; seeing the teachers work as a team and being a part of that collaboration process (seeing the team effort); seeing students set what they need.
- What are the biggest road blocks or pitfalls of an instructional coach?  
Not knowing for sure what your role is – what to spend time on; everyone comes to you for everything; overwhelming if you're new; attitudes to deal with – change is difficult – teachers who do not want to change; time and money.
- What additional support would have been most beneficial to you when you first began working as an instructional coach?  
More communication; spell out expectations for the coach; provide training; direction – a clear job description; more support in the area of meetings where coaches all come together; principals being part of the process so they work hand in hand; co-leadership so the support is there.