

Title I Sponsored  
WebEx Training  
On  
Instructional Coaching  
  
Presented By:  
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The purpose of this training is to provide guidance on the topic of Instructional Coaching, specifically as it applies to North Dakota educators.

Topics to be addressed include:

- What Is an Instructional Coach
- Why Use Instructional Coaches
- Job Responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Funding Instructional Coaches
- Alignment to Student Performance Strategists
- Coding Instructional Coaches on MIS03
- Evaluating Effectiveness of Instructional Coaches
- Suggested Dos and Don'ts
- Resources

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What Is An Instructional Coach?

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## Definition

The dictionary defines a coach as an instructor or trainer of others.

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An instructional coach in education is no different from an athletic coach for sports or a vocal coach for a singer. A coach is simply one who supports and provides training.

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Individuals who provide training and support may be called instructional coaches, mentors, intervention specialists, or any other title that implies support.

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The use of instructional coaches is becoming increasingly prevalent in schools all across the nation.

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Why Are We Seeing a Surge in the Use of Instructional Coaches?

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The use of instructional coaches and mentors is not a new concept and has been used in schools for many years.

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The establishment of the Reading First program in 2002 popularized the use of reading coaches as it was required by federal legislation.

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In North Dakota, we've seen a surge in the number of schools employing instructional coaches, in part because of the increased number of schools identified for program improvement.

Schools are using instructional coaches to meet the requirement to spend 10% of their Title I funds on professional development.

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There may be numerous reasons why a school would be interested in employing an instructional coach; the following are just a few:

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### To Raise Achievement

- Many schools employ instructional coaches as a method of increasing student academic achievement.

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### To Facilitate Professional Development

- We all know the importance of high quality professional development and its potential to create positive change in schools. Instructional coaches are an excellent tool for facilitating professional development.

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### To Promote the Use of Research-Based Practices

- Instructional coaches can equip staff with the knowledge and skills they need to implement effective instructional practices.

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### To Increase Teacher Effectiveness

- Instructional coaches can improve the quality of teaching and learning by providing intentional, ongoing support to staff at the school and classroom levels.
- Students are more likely to perform at higher levels when teachers perform at higher levels.
- Extensive research suggests that teacher quality is the most significant factor affecting student achievement.

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### To Share Resources

- Instructional coaches can also:
  - Offer resources requested by teachers.
  - Recommend resources.
  - Share research, effective instructional practices, and emerging trends.

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### What Are the Specific Job Responsibilities of an Instructional Coach?

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The duties of an instructional coach obviously vary significantly from school to school; however, there are elements or tasks that are common to most schools.

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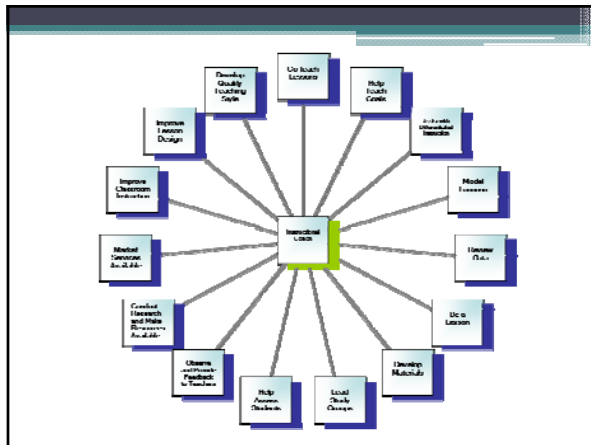
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Through my monitoring and visits to schools, there are some job responsibilities that appear to be consistently used in many schools.

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### Conduct Research and Make Resources Available

- Many job descriptions include researching and providing resources on a range of effective and innovative practices.
- Instructional coaches find and share research, supplemental materials, games, and activities that will enhance the curriculum and increase student achievement.

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### Model Lessons

- Instructional coaches go into classrooms to model lessons. Modeling lessons provides an opportunity for teachers to watch and learn new strategies or instructional practices.

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### Review Data

Instructional coaches can:

- Facilitate data dialogue with teams of teachers;
- Help identify student needs based on data and then;
- Assist to plan and take action to alter instruction.

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### Observe and Provide Feedback to Teachers

- Instructional coaches can observe teachers and focus on the things that teachers do well and provide feedback.
- A coach should seek to help teachers improve and refine their practices.

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Sample job descriptions for instructional coaches (including one specifically for a targeted assistance school) can be accessed at [www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/coaches.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/coaches.shtm).

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### What Are the Qualifications for Instructional Coaches?

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As the Florida Literacy and Reading Excellence (FLaRE) Center states, “the job description of a literacy coach is as multidimensional as reading itself. One must possess the social skills of a seasoned politician, the knowledge of an ivy-league professor, the experience of a veteran teacher, and the flexibility of a gymnast. A good coach is like the proverbial “walking encyclopedia” with a ready index of relevant articles, websites, professional books, and other resources to deepen learning and solve problems” (FLaRE Center n.d.).

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As a district considers hiring someone to fit the role and responsibilities of an instructional coach, remember that they must possess the right mix of knowledge, interpersonal skills, adaptability, flexibility, and potential for growth.

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Finding the right person to hire as an instructional coach can make or break whatever initiative is implemented.

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Across the country, there is significant variation in the qualifications that states and districts require of instructional coaches.

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One of the few consistencies that I have found is that instructional coaches are always educators.

All job descriptions that I've come across require a valid teaching license.

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**Other Commonly Recommended Qualifications Include:**

- Pedagogical knowledge
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Knowledge in content area
- Knowledge in evidence based practices
- Holds a Master's degree
- Strong leadership skills

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• The “Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse” has a document which highlights four levels of qualifications for literacy coaches, ranging from not Good Enough to The Gold Standard. Log on to their website at [www.literacycoachingonline.org](http://www.literacycoachingonline.org) to access this document.

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What Are Some Possible Funding Sources to Support Instructional Coaching?

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There are a variety of possible funding sources to help school districts support the use of instructional coaches. Some of these funding streams may include:

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## Use Your Federal Title Funds

- Title I Part A – Title I funds, under certain circumstances, can be used to help support the cost of instructional coaches.
- Title II Part A – Title II A funds designated for professional development are an opportune source to support professional development for instructional coaches.

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## IDEA

- One of the four priorities in Special Education is to provide intensive district-wide development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling-up, through replication, proven and innovative evidence-based school-wide strategies in reading, math, writing, science, and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- The use of instructional coaches can help meet this priority.

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## School Improvement Funds

- Schools and districts identified for improvement may receive additional funds to help them make Adequate Yearly Progress. Using these additional program improvement dollars to support instructional coaches would be an allowable use of these funds.

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## Pool Your Resources

If schools or districts have limited funds...

- Pool various funding sources, such as Title I and Title II funding or Title I and Special Education funding to hire an instructional coach.
- Districts can pool resources with other districts within a close proximity to share an instructional coach.

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## How Does the North Dakota Mandated Student Performance Strategist Fit with Instructional Coaches?

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Due to the enactment of House Bill 1400 in the 2009 North Dakota Legislative Session, a new section to chapter 15.1-07 of the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) was created outlining requirements for a mandatory Student Performance Strategist for every North Dakota public elementary school.

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Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, each school district must have available one full-time equivalent Student Performance Strategist for every four hundred students in average daily membership in kindergarten through grade three.

▪ How to Calculate FTE Requirements:

$$\frac{\# \text{ of grade K-3 students in average daily membership 09-10}}{400 \text{ students (as required by law)}}$$

= % FTE

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▪ Funding Options/FTE

Since this requirement is in state law, funding for this position must be paid from local school district funds (i.e., state foundation aid).

Districts cannot use Title I paid staff to meet this requirement, as that would be supplanting. Districts can reduce an employee's time in Title I in order to meet this requirement; however, their time paid by Title I/state funds must be prorated to the regular formula and their work. (i.e. 25% student performance strategist and 75% Title I then 25% state paid; 75% Title I paid)

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▪ Qualifications

The NDCC requires the Student Performance Strategist to have a current elementary teaching license. The only other option for schools would be to hire a teacher who holds a current B3 license which allows them to teach grades K-3 in an elementary school setting. Unfortunately, someone who holds a K-12 special education degree would not qualify for this position. Staff hired to fulfill this requirement do **not** need a Title I credential.

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• Schools Have Two Options Regarding Duties for the Student Performance Strategist

In section 15.1-07-32, the NDCC states that schools have two options available to them when assigning duties and responsibilities to their Student Performance Strategist.

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1. Schools may use their Student Performance Strategist as a tutor. A tutor is defined as a licensed teacher who works with students one-on-one or in small groups.

2. Section 15.1-07-32 states that an elementary school may hire a tutor (i.e., Student Performance Strategist) or an instructional coach. Therefore, schools have an option of using their required FTE for an instructional coach, if they prefer.

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How Do You Code an Instructional Coach on the MIS03?

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In North Dakota, all schools are required to report teaching staff on an MIS03 form in the fall of each school year.

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How staff are paid and their specific job descriptions help to determine how they are reported and coded on their school's MIS03 report. There are several options on how to code an instructional coach.

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1. Reading or Math Coach

This position works with staff and students. A Title I reading or math credential is required. Teachers can only work with students that are reflective of the grades outlined within their Title I credential.

Reading		Math	
Position:	22	Position:	22
Area of Responsibility:	261	Area of Responsibility:	261
Course code:	00086	Course code:	00056

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2. Instructional Coach

This position works with staff only, not students. Qualifications include possessing a valid North Dakota teaching license. Many schools use this code for their RTI coaches.

Instructional Coach	
Position:	39
Area of Responsibility:	261
Course code:	00098

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3. Student Performance Strategist/Instructional Coach

This position meets the North Dakota requirement for a Student Performance Strategist (NDCC 15.1-07-32), paid for with state foundation aid.

Student Perf Strat/Inst Coach	
Position:	65
Area of Responsibility:	122
Course code:	00097

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4. Contracted Services for an Instructional Coach With a Company

School districts may also contract with a consulting firm or other entity to provide instructional coaching services to the teaching staff within their school or district. Contracted services would require the district to have a contract on file outlining the services being provided. Districts/schools would not report staff hired through contracted services on an MIS03 report.

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5. Contracted Services for an Instructional Coach with a Licensed Educator Working for a North Dakota School District.

School districts may utilize the services of an Instructional Coach who is working under contract for a different North Dakota school district. In this scenario, often times several school districts work together to share an Instructional Coach. One of the districts would then list the staff member on their MIS03 report and indicate the percentage of time spent at each particular school.

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Districts/schools need to review all of the options available for utilizing an instructional coach and determine the method that best meets the needs of the staff, school, or district.

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Evaluating the Use of Instructional Coaches

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Evaluation is a key component in any intervention or new initiative.

It is imperative for schools or districts that employ instructional coaches to have a method of evaluating the success of instructional coaches.

It is imperative to evaluate periodically so that adjustments can be made in a timely manner.

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Methods of Evaluation

- There are a multitude of methods available to evaluate the use of instructional coaches. Here are a few methods that are being used across the nation.

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- Surveys
- Rubrics
- Self-Assessment
- Review of Data

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An evaluation using a combination of these methods is ideal, as no one evaluation measure can do justice or capture an entire initiative.

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An ideal evaluation of a coaching program would assign teachers in certain buildings to receive coaching services but not in other schools. By constructing a viable comparison group of non-coached teachers versus coached teachers, you could compare and evaluate.

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- Your evaluation process needs to review the impact of the program at many levels.
- The evaluation needs to reflect teacher perception, instructional practice, and improved student learning.

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• The Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse has a tool entitled “Self-Assessment for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches” available on their website at [www.literacycoachingonline.org/library/resources/selfassessmentformshsliteracyinstructionalcoaches.html](http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/library/resources/selfassessmentformshsliteracyinstructionalcoaches.html).

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Dos and Don'ts of Instructional Coaching

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We have found that our teachers appreciate hearing from their peers on what they are doing and what has been successful in other schools.

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I'd like to share some Dos and Don'ts offered by our North Dakota coaches:

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**DO**

- Establish a relationship with teachers (build trust and confidence).
- Have regular contact with the principal; the same vision is important.
- Read up on coaching.
- Market yourself and what you have to offer.

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**DON'T**

- Use a judgmental or evaluative approach. Instructional coaches are not there to evaluate; that is the principal's responsibility.
- Take the place of the principal.
- Go in and act like an expert.

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## Conclusion

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The use of instructional coaches will no doubt continue to grow in the future.

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The USDE is now placing an even greater priority on teacher effectiveness in upcoming grant opportunities, such as the Race to the Top and School Improvement Grant competitions. Therefore, high quality professional development that focuses on improving teacher effectiveness is critical.

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Instructional coaching is a powerful form of job-embedded professional development that helps teachers on-site and in their classrooms and most definitely meets the definition of highly qualified professional development.

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- ### Suggested Resources
- The Coach Approach  
[www.ginsburgeoaching.com/](http://www.ginsburgeoaching.com/)
  - International Reading Association  
[www.reading.org/](http://www.reading.org/)
  - Web Resources on Instructional Coaching  
[www.pacoaching.org/index.php/resources/piic-videos/185-web-resources-on-instruction](http://www.pacoaching.org/index.php/resources/piic-videos/185-web-resources-on-instruction)
  - Instructional Coaching Toolkit  
[www.instructionalcoach.org/tools.html](http://www.instructionalcoach.org/tools.html)
  - Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse  
[www.literacycoachingonline.org/](http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/)
  - ND Department of Public Instruction Website on Instructional Coaching  
[www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/coaches.shtm/](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/coaches.shtm/)

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### Questions

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