

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
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Qualifications for Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches (A.K.A. – standards coaches, content coaches, teacher coaches, guides on the side) work with both new and experienced teachers to facilitate change in instructional practice. Instructional coaches are most often veteran teachers who have demonstrated an excellence in their ability to adapt their teaching practices to meet the needs of their students.

Instructional coaches must be knowledgeable about content area, the mission of the school/district, effective teaching strategies, student learning, and research supported practices.

It is the responsibility of the coach to assist teachers in creating standards based classrooms and develop quality teaching styles and programs which will, in effect, raise student achievement. These coaches often assist existing teachers with improving classroom instruction, management, and lesson design. Instructional coaches also provide feedback in a variety of methods including: showing effective practices, modeling, observing, team-teaching, and guided instruction.

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

Qualifications required in North Dakota:

<u>Reading</u>	<u>Math</u>
Bachelor Degree – ND Teaching License	Bachelor Degree – ND Teaching License
Work in Area of Licensure	Work in Area of Licensure
Reading Credential	Math Credential

Other recommended qualifications:

• A masters degree	• Outgoing personality, willing to take initiative
• Knowledge in content area	• Strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills
• Teaching experience in the grade levels served	• Knowledge in evidence based practices

The “Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse” has a document which highlights four levels of qualifications for literacy coaches from Not Good Enough to The Gold Standard. Log on to their website at www.literacycoachingonline.org/ to access this document.