

# ASK THE TEAM

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## Teachers Supporting Teachers: State Policies for Non-Classroom-Based Instructors

### Question From the Field

**How are states addressing the selection, preparation, certification, evaluation, support, and compensation of non-classroom-based instructional teachers?**

Across the United States, non-classroom-based positions have been added in districts and schools to provide instructional support to teachers. They go by various names—for example, coach, mentor, or teacher leader—but their primary function is to assist teachers who lead classrooms so that they can be more effective, ultimately helping improve student outcomes and teacher retention rates. The way such individuals are selected, prepared, evaluated, and supported varies. The majority of states using non-classroom-based instructional staff do not seem to have state policies addressing who is qualified; what preparation and professional learning opportunities they should receive; or how they should be selected, evaluated, and compensated.

In this Ask the Team brief, we review existing state policies related to non-classroom-based instructors. Organized topically, this brief illuminates exemplars of state policies current as of April 2017 that address the selection, preparation, evaluation, and compensation of non-classroom-based instructors but does not currently endorse any particular policy or example described.

### A Note on Terminology

The research presented in this brief is based on the following definition of non-classroom-based instructors: licensed teachers who have no responsibilities for leading classrooms and are primarily responsible for supporting other classroom teachers.\*

States use a variety of titles to describe non-classroom-based instructors:

- Coach
  - Academic coach
  - Lead coach
  - Teacher mentor coach
- Instructor
  - Instructional specialist
  - Instructional supervisor
  - Instructional facilitator
- Mentor
  - Educator mentor
  - Lead mentor
  - New teacher induction mentor
- Teacher
  - Master teacher
  - Teacher leader

\*Note: Some educators take on responsibility for supporting and coaching their peers while continuing to teach students, but this brief focuses on educators who exclusively support teachers.

## How We Identified State Policies on Non-Classroom-Based Instructors

To identify statewide policies regarding the selection, preparation, certification, evaluation, support, and compensation of non-classroom-based instructors, we used the following steps to conduct a scan of all 50 states and the District of Columbia:

1. We conducted a general Internet scan for resources, reports, and webpages related to non-classroom-based instructional staff.
2. We individually searched for the following key terms combined with the state name for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia:
  - Coach
  - Mentor
  - Instructional
  - New teacher
  - Master teacher
3. We searched state education agency (SEA) websites for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia for the key terms listed in Step 2.
4. Finally, we scanned education statutes regarding teachers for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia to identify any provisions related to instructional coaches, mentors, and new teacher induction.

Disclaimer: We include our primary findings in this brief; although we have attempted to review all states, this may not be an exhaustive list.

## Key Categories of Non-Classroom-Based Instructors

Our scan of state policies revealed two main types of non-classroom-based instructors for which states have prescribed guidelines regarding selection, preparation, certification, evaluation, support, or compensation. Generally, these non-classroom-based roles exist as part of a statewide program.

**Statewide Coaching Programs.** These programs vary in scope across states but have two primary objectives:

Provide classroom teachers with strategies to improve their instructional practice.

Provide expertise in specific areas (e.g., literacy coaches and data coaches).

**Statewide New Teacher Mentoring Programs.** These programs also vary in scope, with some states using experienced current classroom teachers working at the same school as their mentees and others employing designated non-classroom-based mentors. (Note: This brief addresses only the latter.) These programs are intended to do the following:

- Provide new teachers with support through their early years.
- Help new teachers develop strategies and practices to perform effectively in the classroom.
- Improve the retention of new teachers.

## State Policies

The majority of states do not have policies that establish requirements for the selection, preparation, certification, evaluation, support, and compensation of licensed, non-classroom-based instructional staff. Among the 10 states we identified that do have such state policies, these roles are rooted in statute or regulations or are created as part of a state-funded program. State policies vary in scope but focus primarily on eligibility qualifications for non-classroom-based instructors.

### State Spotlight

The **Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System** originated in 2013 legislation that formalized the requirements for teacher leader roles intended to reward and retain effective teachers and attract new teachers. The legislation outlines three teacher leader models, including an instructional coach model, for districts to implement and prescribes elements of the selection process, including eligibility qualifications and certification requirements of candidates, training, compensation, and evaluation requirements for each type of teacher leader.

#### Iowa Statutory Policy for Instructional Coaches

##### Selection

School boards must appoint a site-based review council comprised of teachers and administrators to accept and review applications for teacher leader positions and make recommendations to the superintendent. SEA policy states that districts must conduct “a rigorous selection process” for leadership roles that includes the use of measures of effectiveness and professional growth.

##### Qualifications

Candidates must have the following:

- A state-issued statement of professional recognition issued under [chapter 272](#)

OR

- A valid state license issued under [chapter 272](#) and completion of the teacher mentoring and induction program
- Demonstrated competencies\* of a career teacher, as reviewed by the district
- Participation in professional development with demonstration of continuous improvement
- Completion of the beginning teacher mentoring and induction program and completion of a successful evaluation.
- Be engaged in full-time instructional coaching.

The SEA added the following eligibility requirements for all teachers assigned to leadership roles:

- Three years of teaching experience
- A minimum of 1 year of teaching within the district

\*Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria require career teachers to fulfill eight standards, including the following:

- Engage in professional growth.
- Demonstrate competence in classroom management.
- Monitor student learning.
- Deliver differentiated instruction.
- Demonstrate subject knowledge.
- Prepare appropriately for delivering instruction.
- Fulfill professional responsibilities established by the district.
- Demonstrate ability to enhance the academic performance of students while working toward district achievement goals.

### Iowa Statutory Policy for Instructional Coaches

<b>Training</b>	Teacher leaders must participate in a professional development system facilitated by teachers and other education experts and aligned with the Iowa professional development model adopted by the state board.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Teacher leaders must participate in an annual review by the school's or district's administration that includes peer feedback on the teacher leader's performance of duties. (A new teacher evaluation system was piloted in Iowa in 2015–16.)
<b>Compensation</b>	Instructional coaches receive a salary supplement of no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$7,000 and a contract term that exceeds a teacher contract by 10 days.

Sources: Iowa Code, Chapter 284. Teacher Performance, Compensation, and Career Development (IAC §§ 284-15, 284-16, and 284-17)

### State Spotlight

The **Maryland Teacher Induction Program** is based on state regulations approved by the State Board of Education in 2010 to establish a mentoring program for new teachers. State regulations prescribe certification requirements for mentors and training and evaluation requirements for mentees. The regulations also provide guidance on program implementation; for example, local districts are responsible for hiring mentors who work with no more than 15 new teacher mentees at a time and may reduce workload for new teachers and mentors, to the extent practical, given fiscal and staffing concerns.

### Maryland Regulatory Policy for New Teacher Mentor Programs

<b>Selection</b>	School boards must appoint a site-based review council, consisting of teachers and administrators, to accept and review applications for teacher leader positions and make recommendations to the superintendent. SEA policy states that districts must conduct “a rigorous selection process” for leadership roles that includes the use of measures of effectiveness and professional growth.
<b>Qualifications</b>	State regulations require that candidates have the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Hold an <b>advanced professional certificate</b> and be rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher or be a retiree from a local school system who was rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher.</li><li>■ Demonstrate knowledge of adult learning theory and peer coaching techniques.</li><li>■ Demonstrate knowledge base and skills to address the performance evaluation criteria and outcomes to be met by each mentee.</li><li>■ Possess a positive reference from a current or recent building principal or supervisor that addresses the instructional management, human relations, and communication skills of the mentor applicant.</li></ul>
<b>Training</b>	State regulations require local education agency New Teacher Mentor programs to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Initial training on the essential characteristics of mentoring adults and the duties and responsibilities of a mentor</li><li>■ Ongoing training and feedback</li><li>■ Mentoring Academies held annually in partnership with the New Teacher Center</li></ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	SEA policy directs local school systems to use the <b>Maryland Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide</b> as a resource for developing an evaluation model.

Sources: Maryland Code Regulations, Chapter 13A.07.01, Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program (COMAR 13A.07.01); School Improvement in Maryland: Teacher Induction Program

## 1. SELECTION

State policies regarding the selection of non-classroom-based instructors tend to address eligibility qualifications, but they leave districts largely responsible for developing candidate selection processes, with some exceptions. For example, Iowa’s statute related to non-classroom-based instructors requires districts to develop and use measures of effectiveness and professional growth to determine suitability for teacher leadership roles, and districts must use a selection committee to accept and review applications. The Alaska SEA mentor program uses the [New Teacher Center’s mentor selection standards](#) as a recruiting guide. Candidates must have qualities including outstanding teacher practice, strong inter- and intrapersonal skills, experience with adult learners, respect of peers, and current knowledge of professional development.<sup>1</sup>

**Eligibility Qualifications.** States with policies outlining the qualifications of non-classroom-based instructors typically specify minimum requirements regarding experience, substantive knowledge, and certification. (See State Spotlight.) In addition, some policies identify necessary “soft skills,” such as leadership, teamwork, collaboration, and communication skills as relevant selection criteria. For instructional coaches targeting specific subject areas, including literacy coaches and data coaches, the requirements usually include indicators of expertise in the subject area. (See Table 1.)

**Table 1. Eligibility Qualifications**

Eligibility Qualifications	Instructional Coach	Subject-Specialist Coach
Three years of relevant experience teaching in Grades K-12	✓	✓
Appropriate teacher certification	✓	✓
Demonstrated track record of teaching effectiveness	✓	✓
Leadership skills	✓	✓
Teamwork skills	✓	✓
Collaboration skills	✓	✓
Communication skills	✓	✓
Demonstrated ability to implement programs, strategies, and models	✓	✓
Thorough knowledge of state standards and benchmarks	✓	✓
Expertise in subject area (e.g., advanced degree, knowledge of learning standards)		✓
Track record of driving student achievement in subject area		✓

<sup>1</sup> New Teacher Center, Induction Resource: High Quality Mentoring and Induction Practices. Available at [https://newteachercenter.org/wp-content/uploads/high-quality-mentoring\\_induction-resource.pdf](https://newteachercenter.org/wp-content/uploads/high-quality-mentoring_induction-resource.pdf)

The following table compares the eligibility requirements of three state-established, non-classroom-based instructor roles: instructional coaches in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), teacher mentors in Maryland’s New Teacher Induction Program, and literacy coaches in Tennessee’s Read to Be Ready program.

Eligibility Requirements	D.C. Public Schools’ Instructional Coaches	Maryland’s New Teacher Induction Program	Tennessee’s Read to Be Ready Literacy Coaches
<b>Certifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An advanced professional certificate and being rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher or being a retiree from a local school system who was rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An advanced professional certificate and being rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher or being a retiree from a local school system who was rated as a satisfactory or effective teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A master’s degree in field or Reading Specialist certificate (preferred)</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge/ Abilities/Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability and desire to motivate adult learners to improve professional practice</li> <li>Initiative to develop systems and structures to improve teacher practice within their school</li> <li>Personal qualities of leadership, adaptability, teamwork, dependability, and communication plus customer service skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrated knowledge of adult learning theory and peer coaching techniques</li> <li>A demonstrated knowledge base and skills to address the performance evaluation criteria and outcomes to be met by each mentee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep knowledge of literacy development and instruction</li> <li>Understanding of the Tennessee Academic Standards</li> <li>Ability to collaborate</li> <li>Strategic thinking</li> <li>Planning and organizational skills</li> <li>Oral and written communication skills</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 3 years of successful teaching experience</li> <li>Knowledge of adult learning theory</li> <li>Experience facilitating teams and supporting results-oriented goals</li> <li>Experience presenting to, and working with, adults</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience as a reading coach or teacher—with a record of student achievement</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A positive reference from a current or recent building principal or supervisor that addresses the instructional, management, human relations, and communication skills of the mentor applicant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A positive reference from a current or recent building principal or supervisor that addresses the instructional, management, human relations, and communication skills of the mentor applicant</li> </ul>	

Sources: District of Columbia Public Schools; Maryland State Department of Education Maryland Code Regulations, Chapter 13A.07.06, Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program (COMAR 13A.07.06); Tennessee Department of Education Read to Be Ready Coaching Network

## 2. PREPARATION

State statutes generally say little regarding the preparation requirements for non-classroom-based instructors, but SEAs usually provide or require the completion of training programs. Generally, these include an intensive training program, collaborative group sessions with peer coaches, and ongoing support from consultants or coach leaders.

### District Spotlight

Instructional coaches in **DCPS** are required to participate in the following:

- Intensive training and induction program for 3 days each September
- Six weekly training sessions
- New-coach onboarding annually in August
- Job-embedded training and on-site observation and feedback provided by an instructional coaching program manager

Source: District of Columbia Public Schools: IMPACT, 2015–16

### State Spotlight

New teacher mentors in **Alaska's** Statewide Mentor Project are required to attend eight, weeklong professional development academies in a 2-year period. These sessions include foundational training, ongoing professional development, and formative assessment of teacher training.

Source: Alaska Statewide Mentor Project

## 3. EVALUATION

State-level policy does not specifically address the evaluation of non-classroom-based instructors. In our research, we found only one jurisdiction that offered an example of state-level policy specifically addressing the evaluation of non-classroom-based instructors.

### District Spotlight

DCPS uses a rubric designed specifically for instructional coaches that is part of the district's teacher evaluation system, IMPACT. The evaluation process is based on six standards, each measuring competencies on levels ranging from 1 (*low*) to 4 (*high*). Instructional coaches are assessed four times per year, although coaches previously evaluated as highly effective may be assessed less frequently.

#### D.C. Public Schools Level 4 Evaluation Standards for Instructional Coaches

Standard	Evidence
<b>Analyze Data Prior to the Learning Cycle</b>	Prior to the learning cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develops teachers' capacity to analyze their practice</li> <li>■ Develops teachers' capacity to analyze student data to drive improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Analyze Data During the Learning Cycle</b>	During the learning cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develops teachers' capacity to analyze their practice</li> <li>■ Develops teachers' capacity to analyze student data to drive improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Design Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies knowledge of a broad range of instructional practices</li> <li>■ Develops targeted coaching plans based on data and aligned with specific goals</li> </ul>

## D.C. Public Schools Level 4 Evaluation Standards for Instructional Coaches

Standard	Evidence
<b>Implement Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently and effectively implements coaching plans</li> <li>Continue to provide opportunities for growth through monitoring and informal support</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstrate Teacher and Student Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant improvement in teacher practice and student achievement</li> <li>Evident for all or almost all teachers who receive coaching</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitate Adult Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently facilitates adult learning in individual and group settings</li> <li>Releases facilitation responsibility to teachers as appropriate</li> <li>Develops teacher leaders who employ effective facilitation strategies</li> </ul>

Source: IMPACT: The District of Columbia Public Schools Effectiveness Assessment for School-Based Personnel, 2015-16

## 4. COMPENSATION

Few states have policies regarding the compensation of non-classroom-based instructors. An exception is Iowa, where the statute enabling teacher leader models dictates that instructional coaches receive a salary supplement of \$5,000 to \$7,000 and a contract term that exceeds a teacher contract by 10 days. Iowa curriculum and professional development leaders receive a salary stipend of \$10,000 to \$12,000 and a contract term that exceeds a teacher contract by 15 days.

**Collective Bargaining.** State collective bargaining rules generally apply to non-classroom-based instructors who are defined by law as “public employees,” “public school employees,” or “certificated” or “certified” school employees who are not excluded by exceptions for some staff, including “professional employees” and “supervisors.” District-level collective bargaining agreements may specifically recognize coaching roles, such as instructional coaches, subject specialists, or mentor teachers, and address their particular duties and compensation.

### District Spotlight

#### Collective Bargaining Policies for Non-Classroom-Based Instructors

<b>D.C. Public Schools Instructional Coaches</b>	Instructional coaches (who are American Federation of Teachers union members) are paid commensurate with education level and relevant work experience. The instructional coach role is recognized within the contract.
<b>Des Moines Independent Community School District Instructional Coaches</b>	Instructional coaches are included within the broad definition of “regular full-time certified and part-time certified teachers” under the comprehensive agreement between the district and the Des Moines Education Association (whose teachers are National Education Association union members). A letter of understanding within the agreement recognizes roles in Iowa’s TLC System, including TLC coaches, and outlines salary supplements and additional contract days for these roles.
<b>Metro Nashville Public Schools Academic Coaches</b>	Academic coaches are referenced in the district’s educational agreement with the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association, which briefly outlines their duties as well as the supplements payable to coaches holding National Board Certification.

Sources: Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Washington Teachers’ Union and the District of Columbia Public Schools, 2007–2012; Comprehensive Agreement Between the Des Moines Independent Community School District and the Des Moines Education Association, 2015–2017; Educational Agreement Between the Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education and the Executive Board of the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association





## I WANT TO KNOW MORE!

### RESOURCES

#### Alaska

Statewide Mentor Project

Teacher Contract, Anchorage

New Teacher Center State Policy Review: Alaska New Educator Induction

#### District of Columbia

IMPACT Teacher Evaluation System

Instructional Coaches

Teacher Contract

#### Hawaii

Hawaii Teacher Induction Program Standards

Hawaii Board of Education Teacher Recruitment Policy

Hawaii State Department of Education Induction and Mentoring

New Teacher Center State Policy Review: Hawaii New Educator Induction

Hawaii State Department of Education Teacher Induction Program

#### Iowa

The Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) System

Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria

Iowa Code 284.3

Iowa Code: Teacher career paths, leadership roles, and compensation framework: See: IAC §§ 284-15, 284-16, and 284-17

State-Issued Statement of Professional Recognition (required by statute for instructional coaches under chapter 272)

#### Maryland

Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program

Advanced Professional Eligibility Certificate

New Teacher Center State Policy Review: Maryland New Educator Induction

#### Michigan

Literacy Coaches Grant

Title I Regional Assistance Grant

Michigan Department of Education New Teacher mentoring, induction, and professional development state laws

#### New Mexico

Reads to Lead Initiative

Courses of Instruction and School Programs, Reading Initiative

## **Ohio**

Teacher Residency Code

Resident Educator License Code

Ohio Department of Education Resident Educator Program Description and Tool Kit

License Requirements

New Teacher Center State Policy Review: Ohio New Educator Induction

## **Pennsylvania**

Instructional Coaching in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative

Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Learning (PIIC)

The Collaborative Coaching Board

PIIC Professional Learning Opportunity 2016

Instructional Coach Endorsement Guidelines

## **Tennessee**

Read to Be Ready Coaching Network (includes selection rubric)

Teacher Leader Guidebook (includes reference to mentoring coaches)

Teacher Contract

## **General**

New Teacher Center State Policies on Teacher Mentors

**For more information on this topic,** please e-mail [gtlcenter@air.org](mailto:gtlcenter@air.org).

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