

2016-17 Evaluation of Academic Leadership and Coaching

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At-a-Glance

The ultimate goal of Academic Leadership and Coaching was to promote student achievement, quality of instruction, and positive culture and climate in the Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD). In an effort to support equitable access to curricular rigor across all content areas, the funds allocated to this initiative supported the development and maintenance of a system to support academic coordinators and academic facilitators, who, in turn, supported the efforts of campus instructional coaches. The model included coaching, data-driven instruction, support systems, professional development, and professional learning communities (PLCs). The model also promoted teacher growth in content knowledge, leadership capacity, and instructional pedagogy. In addition, academic coordinators acted as liaisons between the School Leadership, Teaching and Learning, and Evaluation and Assessment departments to develop and implement training plans for academic facilitators and campus instructional coaches.

According to the workscope, the budget for 2016-17 Academic Leadership and Coaching was \$4,234,069 of Title I funds. Of these funds, \$3,978,857 was for payroll costs, \$91,413 was for supplies and materials, and \$163,799 was for other operating costs, such as employee travel.

This evaluation includes documentation of activities related to this program, including characteristics of funded individuals, professional development, and other services provided through program funds.

What were the characteristics and functions of funded individuals?

Program leadership provided lists of current academic coordinators and academic facilitators as of November 10, 2016. The evaluator linked these files to district demographic files dated November 14, 2016 and conducted frequency analyses to summarize demographic information for funded individuals. Program leadership also provided academic coordinator and academic facilitator job descriptions, and the evaluator summarized these documents.

Demographic Characteristics

Funding for this program supported six academic coordinators and 39 academic facilitators. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of these individuals.

Table 1: 2016-17 Demographic Characteristics of Academic Coordinators and Facilitators

	Academic Coordinators (N=6)		Academic Facilitators (N=39)	
	n	%	n	%
Sex				
Female	5	83.3	31	79.5
Male	1	16.7	8	20.5
Ethnicity				
Afr. American	4	66.7	21	53.8
Hispanic	1	16.7	6	15.4
White	1	16.7	9	23.1
Other	0	0.0	3	7.7
Highest Degree				
B.A./B.S.	0	0.0	12	30.8
M.A./M.S.	5	83.3	27	69.2
Ph.D.	1	16.7	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0
Years in Dallas ISD				
Less than 1	0	0.0	1	2.6
1-3 years	2	33.3	6	15.4
4-6 years	0	66.7	0	0.0
7-9 years	0	0.0	3	7.7
10 or more	4	0.0	29	74.4
Average Years	17		15	

Source: Academic facilitator and academic coordinator names provided by program leadership on 11/10/16. District demographic files dated 11/14/16.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding.

Job Descriptions

Academic Coordinators

The role of academic coordinators was to collaborate with Teaching and Learning staff members with regard to professional development needs for both academic facilitators and campus instructional coaches.

Academic Facilitators

Academic facilitators provided professional development to campus instructional coaches on their assigned campuses, especially in their area of content expertise. This support aligned with instructional priorities arising from the goals of the Dallas ISD Board of Trustees and the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI). Academic facilitators helped to improve quality of instruction by providing direct coaching to campus instructional coaches, thus cultivating a culture of instructional feedback.

What professional development and support resulted from this funding?

Program leadership provided an agenda outlining the formal training provided to academic facilitators in 2016-17. Because training provided by academic coordinators and academic facilitators primarily was tailored to the needs of feeder patterns and campuses, the evaluator distributed online surveys in April 2017 to academic coordinators ($n = 6$; 50% response rate), academic facilitators ($n = 39$; 85% response rate), and campus instructional coaches ($n = 382$; 81% response rate). The purpose of these surveys was to compile lists of 1) professional development and other services provided to campus instructional coaches and to campuses, and 2) conferences and additional training attended by academic coordinators and facilitators. The evaluator content analyzed these open-ended responses and summarized data into general themes.

Support and Training for Academic Facilitators

Learn and Lead Academic Facilitator Academy

Academic facilitators attended the “Learn and Lead Academic Facilitator Academy,” comprised of seven sessions of in-house training throughout the academic year.¹ Table 2 lists the topics covered in 2016-17.

Table 2: 2016-17 Learn and Lead Academic Facilitator Academy Topics Covered

Academic Facilitator Academy Topics
• DDI Framework • Applying PEI and the Dallas ISD Instructional Framework to Campus Instructional Foci • How to Select Impactful Instructional Moves to Increase Students' Performance • How to Use the Feedback Loop and the Dallas ISD Instructional Framework to Create Effective Interventions and to Monitor Instructional Plans • Analyzing Student Data by Applying the Four Steps for Data Driven Analysis Protocol • Coaching and Feedback • Balanced Literacy Framework • Small Group Instruction • Math and Reading ACP Data Analyses • Marzano-Type Framework • Creating Solid Reteach Strategies/Outlines for STAAR • Facilitative Leadership

Source: Program leadership, March 2017.

Note: DDI=Data Driven Instruction. PEI=Principal Excellence Initiative. STAAR=State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness. ACP = Assessment of Course Performance.

Conferences and Additional Training

Funding for academic coordinators and academic facilitators included support for attending approved state, national, and other related conferences and training programs for extending content and coaching knowledge and effectiveness. Table 3 shows conferences and other training academic facilitators reported that they attended in 2016-17.

Table 3: 2016-17 Conferences and Additional Training Sessions Attended by Academic Coordinators and Academic Facilitators

Conference/Training Name
• ASCD Conference on Teaching and Learning • National Council of Teachers of Mathematics • Bambrick: Get Better Faster • Research in Mathematics Education • STAAR Writing Boot Camp • Advancing Improvement in Education • Jim Knight Better Conversations • Design Elements for Instruction: Building Students' Conceptual Understandings • Number Talks: Facilitating Math Discourse to Build Conceptual Understanding (K-6) • Using Multiple Representations to Build Understanding of Fractions (3-5) • Authentic Writer's Workshop: Secondary ELAR Literacy Stations (K-5) • Using Social Justice to Inspire Reading and Writing for Disengaged Learners • Marzano Research Lab Training on Standards-Based Grading • Understanding by Design • Jeff Anderson Everyday Editing • International Association for K-12 Online Learning • Momentous Mornings for Education • Jane Shaffer Writing Program • Texas Regional Collaborative for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching • Essays and Grammar with Gretchen Bernabel • Trainer of Trainers • Why We Need to Teach Reading and Writing (Timothy Shanahan) • Text Dependent Questions/Developing Rigorous Readers/Close Reading

Source: Survey of academic coordinators and academic facilitators, April 2017.

Note: ASCD = Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. STAAR = State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness. K = Kindergarten. ELAR = English Language Arts and Reading.

¹ In 2016-17, these sessions lasted either one or two (consecutive) days and occurred in September (two sessions), October, November, January, February, and April.

Training and Services Provided to Campus Instructional Coaches

Table 4 summarizes the training and services provided by academic coordinators and academic facilitators to campus instructional coaches, feeder patterns, and campuses.

Table 4: 2016-17 Training and Support Provided by Academic Coordinators and Academic Facilitators

Training and Support Provided
• Strategy/Content Professional Development • Individual Support (1:1 Coaching, Observations, Modeling, Co-Teaching) • Coordinating/Facilitating Meetings and Training for Campuses and Feeder Patterns • Data Assistance and Monitoring • Campus-Level Support (Decision Making, Planning, Grants) • Coaching Professional Development • Data Professional Development • Testing Professional Development • Communications (Weekly Emails to Campus and District Leaders and to Teaching and Learning) • Resource Assistance • Lesson Planning and Support • Campus Walks • Curriculum Development and Support • District or Feeder Level Support • Executive Director Support • Assessment Development • General/Other Professional Development

Source: Survey of academic coordinators and academic facilitators, May 2016.

Recommendation

Continue to support program as funding allows. Funding for this program resulted in a wide variety of professional development and other services related to all core content areas on campuses throughout Dallas ISD. Maintaining well-trained and informed leadership on campuses is critical for teacher growth and student success.

The electronic version of this report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

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