

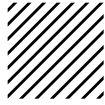


INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY  
COACHING PROGRAM

Instructional Technology Coaching to  
**ENHANCE  
PROFESSIONAL  
PRACTICE**

How an LTC Instructional Technology Coach  
Can Support Professional Growth





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Instructional Technology Coaching to

# ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

**How an LTC Instructional Technology Coach  
Can Support Professional Growth**

Instructional Technology Coaching to Enhance Professional Practice  
details the rationale and need for instructional technology coaches in  
school districts across Illinois.

This report highlights the role of an instructional technology coach  
and the Learning Technology Center's (LTC) Instructional Technology  
Coaching Program.

## WHY COACHING?

The field of education continues to face turbulence after the disruption of COVID-19. According to a 2022 National Education Association (NEA) [survey](#), an estimated 55% of educators are considering leaving the profession earlier than originally planned. For those remaining in the field, support is essential. Adding an instructional technology coach to your district is one type of support.

Technology continues to evolve rapidly. While teachers focus on pedagogy, instructional technology coaches can assist them by keeping up with technology trends, understanding student privacy concerns, learning new technology programs, and helping bridge the gap between the IT department and educators. Instructional technology coaches take this information and help teachers weave it into their instructional practices.

Technology will continue to play a role in students' lives after they graduate. Understanding and utilizing technology are skills required in most industries today. The World Economic Forum acknowledged this in its [2020 Future of Jobs Report](#). This report states by 2025, the advancement of technology may shift the workforce as we know it. Nearly 97 million new jobs may be created, with 85 million existing roles becoming obsolete.

Educators understand the importance of these skill sets and must prepare students for future careers. As referenced by [Digital Promise](#), there are more than 90 mentions of technology and digital skills in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

In May 2022, the Illinois State Board of Education released a Computer Literacy Knowledge and Skill Development Continuum. Our state isn't alone in recognizing the importance of technology in education. All 50 states have adopted, adapted, or



**Our LTC Coach has been such a valuable support for our faculty and staff. Whether it is a formal professional development workshop or working through a one-on-one coaching cycle with a teacher, her support of our instructional development has elevated our knowledge and instruction.**

### 2022 LTC Coaching District Administrator

endorsed the ISTE Standards for students. These standards “provide the competencies for learning, teaching and leading in the digital age, providing a comprehensive roadmap for the effective use of technology in schools worldwide.” An instructional technology coach can assist educators in ensuring that the technology they are using is helping prepare students for the future.

Coaching also fosters a culture of learning by adults with improved student achievement as the ultimate goal; coaches support the adults that support the students. Designed to enhance instructional practices, instructional technology coaching offers job-embedded, real-time, and sustained professional development. Most professional development is delivered to groups, at the same time and pace. Coaching can be differentiated to meet teachers where they are today and tailored to meet individual teachers' technology integration goals - both resulting better overall professional development outcomes.

# A RESEARCH-BACKED STRATEGY

According to [TeachBoost's 2022 Coaching Impact Report](#), districts spend an average of \$18,000 per teacher per year on training. Despite this, 70% of those teachers' evaluation ratings remain the same or decline year to year (Jacob and McGovern (TNTP), 2015). Kraft and Blazer (2018)'s research also suggests that instructional coaching can be more effective than traditional professional development by creating meaningful change in teacher practice and student achievement. In short: adding an instructional technology coach to your district costs substantially less and yields an effective impact.

Additional research also supports coaching. Professional development is more effective in transfer to practice for classroom teachers when coaching is included (Joyce and Showers, 2002). Instructional technology coaches focus on growing educator capacity, which in turn drives student achievement.

Research from Marzano Research and The Instructional Coaching Group confirms the power of coaching. Robert Marzano says in "Coaching Classroom Instruction" that "Professional Development training alone does not provide enough support for a teacher to transfer their learning to the classroom. When individualized coaching is added to the training experience, there is a dramatic increase in the transfer of new teaching strategies to the classroom."

Jim Knight explains in "Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction" that "Our experience has shown that when teachers receive an appropriate amount of support for professional learning, more than 90% of them embrace and implement programs that improve students' experiences in the classroom. The challenge for educational leaders, then, is to create and deploy professional development that makes it easier for teachers to implement change initiatives" (Knight). An instructional technology coach can provide such support.



# HOW CAN A TECHNOLOGY COACH IMPACT YOUR DISTRICT?

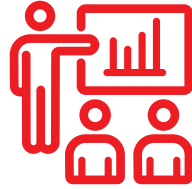
## ADMINISTRATORS

### Administrator Benefits to Coaching:



#### Support District Initiatives

Works with administrators to support district initiatives.



#### Spot Classroom Trends

Conducts non-evaluative observations to spot trends and provide suggestions.



#### Act as a Thought Partner

Serve as a sounding board for tech integration ideas.

## EDUCATORS

### Educator Benefits to Coaching:



#### WORK EMBEDDED COACHING

Work with individual teachers on specific goals or with grade-level departments.



#### TECH-CENTERED SKILLS

Provides space to grow competency with technology selection, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.



#### SPOT TRENDS

Conduct non-evaluative observations for teachers to spot trends and provide suggestions.



#### CONDUCT COACHING CYCLES

Work with teachers to identify a problem of practice, select strategies, implement, iterate, and reflect on progress.



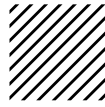
#### RESEARCH & DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES

Incorporate the latest research and updates to help educators get the most out of their tech.



#### IDENTIFY NEEDS & DEVELOP LEARNING GOALS

Help teachers identify needs and develop learning goals.



## COACHES SUPPORT ADMINISTRATORS & EDUCATORS



### Connection to other LTC Services

Connect your district with a state-wide team of edtech experts and free edtech resources.



### A Focus on the Big Picture

Support the use of a technology framework that connects individual practices to a larger edtech integration strategy.



### Support for Administrators & Educators

- Bridge the gap between educators and administrators
- Learn and support new or existing technology
- Guide impactful technology selection
- Engage in continuous learning that aligns with current technology and new instructional practices
- Design and facilitate district-specific professional development for large and small groups
- Promote leadership development for educators
- Contribute to data collection and conversations about improving student learning



### MODEL TECH INTEGRATION

Model technology tool integration at both a micro and macro level.



### CO-TEACH

Co-teach in classrooms with gradual release.



### ENCOURAGE TEACHERS TO TAKE RISKS IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Receiving guidance from a coach through co-teaching, modeling, and gradual release allows educators to take more risks.

# WHERE DOES TECHNOLOGY COACHING FIT IN?

“Technology can be a powerful tool for transforming learning. It can help affirm and advance relationships between educators and students, reinvent our approaches to learning and collaboration, shrink long-standing equity and accessibility gaps, and adapt learning experiences to meet the needs of all learners. However, to be transformative, educators must have the knowledge and skills to take full advantage of technology-rich learning environments.”

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN (2017)

Increasingly, technology is part of our educational landscape and workforce. School districts devote a substantial budget to technology and related support services. Hiring an instructional technology coach can help provide a **reliable return on that investment.**

With a technology coach, all of your districts’ devices and digital platforms will be put to full use, thanks to the coach’s knowledge of the latest integration strategies and updates. Many technology coaches are also former classroom educators, so they can connect with teachers and provide the kind of empathetic support not typically found in traditional professional development.



My LTC coach is an exceptional coach and ever available wealth of information coupled with humor, enthusiasm, patience and encouragement. He has provided me with invaluable pedagogical resources that daily inform my instruction. He has taken away my fear of and for technology and is instrumental in helping me understand the nuances of several platforms and tools. Succinctly, he is superb!

—2022 LTC Coaching District Administrator





Instructional technology coaches focus on increasing educator capacity, which in turn empowers educators to advance student learning. To do that, they partner with teachers to set goals, identify tools and strategies to reach those goals, see teachers through implementation, and reflect on their progress at every step.

Coaches can also assist educators in identifying technologies that streamline their operations and make it easier to stay organized in a digital learning environment. These added efficiency allow educators to further enhance their instruction, and provide students with a model of outstanding digital citizenship.

## WHAT COACHING IS NOT

The decision to bring in an instructional technology coach should not be taken lightly. While evaluating whether coaching is right for your district, remember that coach is not:

- **Required.** Educator impact will be most significant if a teacher works with a coach voluntarily and confidentially.
- **Providing evaluation data** or conducting observations aligned to evaluations. Coaching for improvement is a journey a coach and educator take together, without the pressure of evaluation.
- **Substituting** when educators are absent. A coach can sometimes be seen as available since they are not assigned to students. For impact to occur, coaches must be free to coach.
- **Acting as an administrator.** While considered a leader, a coach is a bridge between an administrator and educator and works equally well with both stakeholders.
- **Fixing broken technology.** Although “technology” is in the title, a coach’s role is to use technology to enhance and elevate instruction, not to repair it.
- **Administering statewide assessments.** While coaches are happy to support district initiatives, they impact instructional practice when they are working with teachers and not on “other duties as assigned”.

# HOW ARE COACHES FUNDED?

With the LTC Instructional Technology Coaching Program, districts determine the number of days they would like a coach and pay a daily rate for their service.

Our program is a shared-cost model, meaning several districts in a region can gain access to a coach at a more affordable rate.

Through state and federal funding sources, coaching can quickly become a financially-viable professional development option in your district.

## The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

### 01

The 2015 reauthorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act includes multiple calls for state and local agencies to implement and support instructional coaching (Desimone and Pak, 2017). [Title I](#), [Title II](#), and [Title IV](#) are applicable

## Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

### 02

The CARES Act includes \$13.2 billion in emergency relief funding for K-12 schools, known as the [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ESSER\) Fund](#).

## State Grants

### 03

Many states provide funding for coaches through competitive state grants for innovation or school improvement. In Illinois school districts may have access to funding sources such as Illinois Digital Equity and IL-EMPOWER

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, VISIT OUR [FUNDING HUB](#).**



# ABOUT THE LTC INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY COACH PROGRAM



**My LTC coach is validating and supportive, using personal examples to help us improve!**

—A 2022 LTC Coaching District Educator

In this year-long program, an instructional technology coach works with teachers and school leaders to create and implement a customized coaching plan. Although plans are unique to each district's needs and priorities, the coach's consistent goal is to help educators improve teaching practices and enhance their technology integration – all to advance student learning. Several of our coaching plans include one-on-one coaching cycles, facilitated grade-level team discussions, or large-group professional learning opportunities.

#### **In addition, school districts:**

- Participate in a kick-off call with LTC staff to identify priorities and determine services.
- Work with the LTC using on-boarding documentation to help a coach start the school year successfully.
- Receive individual, ongoing support from an assigned instructional coach throughout the year.
- Have access to coaching data to understand how time is being spent.
- Receive support, site visits, and check-ins with the Instructional Technology Coaching Program Director.
- Gain ease of access to additional LTC resources and staff.

#### **COST-SHARING MODEL.**

The LTC Instruction Technology Coaching Program is a cost-sharing model. Each coach is an LTC employee and works with multiple districts in a similar geographic area. Through a shared-service model, small- and medium-sized school districts that do not need a full-time instructional technology coach can access the benefits of coaching without adding staff or committing to a full-time employee.

#### **DECISION DEADLINES.**

In the spring, the LTC works with districts to identify needs, sign contracts, and pair districts with an LTC-employed instructional coach. If an LTC-employed instructional coach is not available in the area, the signing district will be invited to participate in the interview process.

#### **NUMBER OF DAYS.**

Before starting the program, participating school districts select the total contractual days ranging from 10 to 170.



# LTC COACH IMPACT

Since the program's inception in 2019, LTC coaches have worked with educators in 25 school districts across Illinois. Our reach ranges from urban to rural settings, from special education co-ops to high schools in buildings with Google, Apple, and Microsoft products. In 2022, LTC coaches are impacting 18 school districts across the state.

LTC coaches work directly with educators to set goals, integrate technology, and increase teacher capacity. Those teachers, in turn, work with students incorporating the skills, strategies, and technology their coach has helped them cultivate.



**75**  
SCHOOLS

The number of schools LTC coaches service in 2022.



**2,114**  
EDUCATORS

The number of educators that had access to an LTC coach in 2022.



**26,130**  
STUDENTS

The number of students impacted by the presence of an LTC coach in their building in 2022.



**Our LTC Technology Coach has provided technical assistance and awareness of new technology to support and enhance teaching and learning. In addition, our teachers have taken advantage of professional development opportunities and her tips, tricks, and activities through monthly newsletters, Tech Tuesdays, and special projects. She has been a great asset to our district!**

**—2022 LTC Coaching District Administrator**

# WHAT DO LTC COACHES HAVE TO OFFER?

## **Hivemind.**

Coaching is a unique position. Often, one coach is asked to support different grade levels, content areas, and levels of expertise across a district. Our coaches have a built-in network of support and knowledge. They use technology to collaborate daily to share resources, problem-solve, and learn from each other as they coach in locations across Illinois. While a district may contract for one LTC coach, they are, in essence, getting the support and knowledge base of all LTC coaches.

## **Pedagogical Knowledge.**

Our coaches are former teachers, so they understand not only the constraints and requirements that come along with teaching but also the pedagogy required to instruct students. We have National Board Certified educators on staff and ISTE Certified Educators on our team.

## **Technological Knowledge.**

We have coaches that serve in Microsoft, Apple, and Google environments. Several of our coaches have additional credentials related to technology. These include Google Certified Teachers, Trainers and Coaches, Microsoft Innovative Expert Educators, Apple Teachers, and Apple Learning Coaches. Our team members often seek certifications from platforms used in school districts to strengthen their knowledge of these products, as well.

## **Coaching Content Knowledge.**

All LTC coaches are Google for Education Certified Coaches. They participate in coaching book studies, have access to monthly state-wide coaching meetings, and attend and present at conferences to build their knowledge around coaching best practices.

## **Individual strengths.**

Our coaches come to us from various settings, and each coach has areas of education they are passionate about. These areas include coaches that have served as math and reading specialists, backgrounds in social and emotional learning (SEL) and the arts.

## **Research and Development.**

LTC coaches work with educators in various content areas across Pre K-12th grade. They understand how to leverage their time to research and develop materials to support educators and run professional development. They also have access to the entire Learning Technology Center team and can help connect district leaders with additional services.

## **Professionalism.**

Our coaches are polite, respectful, and reliable. They pride themselves on building relationships, effective communication, and their love of technology in education. We often hear from participating districts how their LTC coach is viewed as a staff member.

## **Virtual Coaching.**

If a district has a specific need that one of our coaches feels can be better served by another LTC coach, we offer virtual coaching opportunities.

## **Daily Activities and Support.**

The daily activities of an instructional technology coach vary depending on the objectives of teachers and school administration.

## **Common activities that coaches help educators tackle include:**

- Coaching Cycles
- Informal Coaching
- Co-Planning
- Goal Setting
- Modeling or Co-teaching
- Observation or Feedback
- Problem Solving
- Curriculum Work
- Resource Development
- District Planning
- Data Analysis
- Small or Large Group Instruction
- Facilitation of Professional Development
- Technical Training
- Individual or Team Meeting

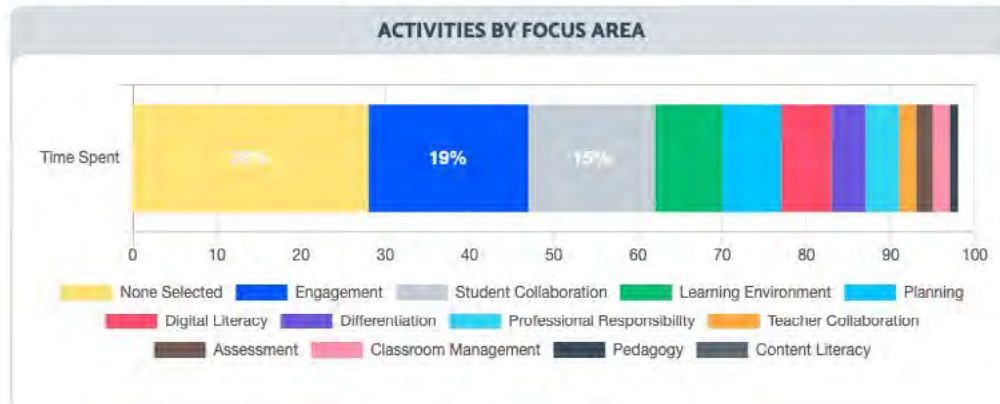
# ACCOUNTABILITY EVERY STEP OF THE WAY



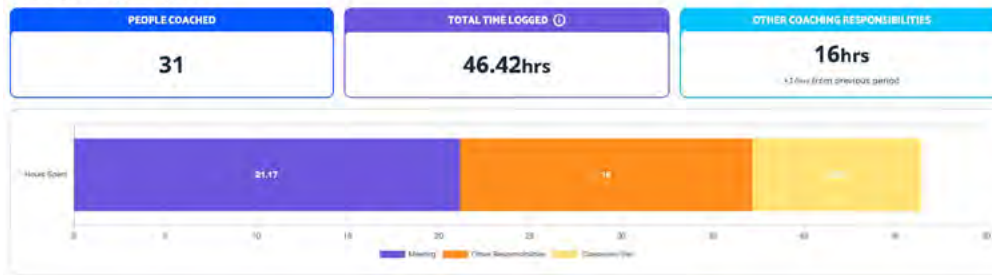
Thank you for having grace for me not “knowing” [technology tools].  
 –A 2022 LTC Coaching District Educator

**Data.**

LTC coaches track how their time is spent while in districts, and reports are generated for district leaders. Here’s just one example of a coach’s report, broken down by focus area and most time spend on task:



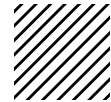
**How is coaching time spent?**



**What's the breakdown?**



# HOW ARE LTC COACHES SUPPORTED?



Coaches need coaching, too! At the LTC, we pride ourselves on providing professional development opportunities to our coaches. Through in-house and external PD, we focus on technology, content, and pedagogical topics.

Some examples of the experiences our coaches participate in include:

- Yearlong internal and external PD including adult learning theory, coaching strategies, and goal setting
- Bi-Monthly LTC staff meetings
- Conferences: LTC coaches have presented and/or attended conferences such as ICIC, IETC, IDEAcon, and ISTE
- Weekly group meetings
- Monthly 1:1 meetings
- Daily group chats
- Book studies

## NEXT STEPS

With the educational landscape continually changing and the presence of technology increasing, there is a pressing need to provide daily, job-embedded support and professional development to teachers.

Districts invest heavily in technology devices; it's time to invest in technology coaches that can support teachers in using those devices to organize, communicate, and enhance instruction for today's students.

If you are interested in bringing an LTC Instructional Technology Coach to your district, Contact Nicole Zumpano, Director of Instructional Technology Coaching, to learn more.

[nmzumpano@ltcillinois.org](mailto:nmzumpano@ltcillinois.org)



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LEARNING  
**TECHNOLOGY**  
CENTER of ILLINOIS



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