

Hudson City School District

Region: Capital Region

Motto: Destination Graduation, Get on Board

Awards: Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness 1 and 3

Superintendent: Ms. Maria Suttmeier



Note: Profiles of this nature have been developed by the Office of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness at the New York State Education Department to highlight how recipients of the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) Grant have established career ladder pathway models to address their diverse student achievement and talent management needs.

HUDSON CITY SD AT-A-GLANCE

The following data was retrieved from the 2013-14 New York State Report Cards via the [Public Access Data Site](#) unless otherwise indicated.

Schools in the District



3

Teachers in the District



157

Principals in the District



5

Turnover Rate of Teachers with Fewer than Five Years of Experience



29%

*2012-13 data

Turnover Rate of all Teachers

17%

*2012-13 data

State-Provided Growth Ratings

Ineffective

1

(3%)

Developing

5

(17%)

Effective

19

(66%)

Highly Effective

4

(14%)

Student Enrollment



1,817

Per Pupil Expenditure



\$10,667.00

*2012-13 data

Students by Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaska Native

2

(0%)

Black or African American

430

(24%)

Hispanic or Latino

238

(13%)

Asian or Native Hawaiian/
Other Pacific Islander

179

(10%)

White

872

(48%)

Multiracial

96

(5%)

Other Student Groups

Limited English Proficient Students

134

(7%)

Students with Disabilities

350

(19%)

Economically Disadvantaged Students

1,230

(68%)

Eligible for Free Lunch

947

(52%)

Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch

180

(10%)

OVERARCHING VISION

Hudson City School District (HCSD), located in the Capital Region, is a Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 1 and 3 recipient of \$467,229. Educators in Hudson have created an enduring vision of shared leadership, led by Teacher Leader Coaches, a Lead Evaluator, and Principal Leaders that spans across 3 schools, 1,817 students, and 157 teachers.

Original Vision Outlined at the Start of the STLE Grant Period

HCSD was faced with staffing challenges due to limited budgetary resources and their students were struggling to meet standards on state assessments when they applied for the STLE 1 grant. HCSD was designated as a District In Need of Improvement (DINI) in 2011-12 for Elementary /Middle-Level English Language Arts and Secondary-Level English Language Arts. The district has been designated as a Focus District since the 2012-13 school year. Consequently, HCSD's original vision outlined at the start of the STLE 1 grant period focused on the need for consistent, quality instruction in all schools. They set a target for at least 85% of their classes to exceed their growth goal of a 5% increase per year on state assessments. The district's vision included the creation of a district-wide Lead Evaluator to help them realize their objectives. The Lead Evaluator position would address the need for additional support with teacher evaluations across the district; they would not only assist building principals with completing the large number of observations required each school year but would also monitor inter-rater reliability. This would help the district understand instructional practices across the K-12 system. Professional development opportunities would be tailored to the specific needs of teachers and buildings based on the Lead Evaluator's findings in collaboration with district staff. Professional development plans, grounded in evidence-based practice, would be designed to target identified strengths and weaknesses in order to train teachers and ultimately improve student outcomes. Consistent with these efforts, a four day 2014 Summer Institute for all teachers would focus on various workshops related to the college and career ready standards and differentiated instruction.

Additionally, embedded Teacher Leader Coaches would be implemented to support the daily instructional needs of teachers. These Teacher Leader Coaches would work to improve the quality of teaching practices that ultimately result in positive student outcomes. HCSD believed that experts existed within the district's classrooms and that the STLE grant would help them share their expertise across the district. STLE grant funds presented an opportunity for a larger group of teachers to make improvements in the district and be recognized for their leadership ability.

Current Status of Career Ladder Pathways

Today, HCSD's vision remains the same. The career ladder pathway model is thriving as it was originally designed. A primary goal of school reform in HCSD is to foster a district-wide culture of high expectations and high performance. Creating this culture has been a central focus in the development of the district mission, vision, and goals as well as specific targets for reaching those goals. The mantra "Destination Graduation – Get on Board" is being used to focus all stakeholders on the importance of graduation as a goal for all students.

The role of the Lead Evaluator for Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) has been well accepted by diverse stakeholders in the district. This position supports differentiated professional development and the continued implementation of lessons, units, and instructional practices in the classroom aligned to college and career ready standards. The Lead Evaluator works with the Coordinator for School Improvement, Director of Student Services, and principals to observe teachers and follow-up with coaching to ensure that professional development has an impact in the classroom.

Teacher Leader Coaches began serving in their roles in the 2013-14 school year. They have unique roles in the district, serving as math, English as a Second Language, technology, and data specialists. Their work

involves peer coaching and mentoring other teachers as well as offering professional development sessions to diverse groups of teachers. The STLE 3 grant allows Teacher Leader Coaches to continue to grow in their role through professional support provided throughout the school year. Teachers and leaders are prepared and further developed for their career ladder pathway positions through coaching provided by district leaders as well as professional development provided by The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) and the Questar III Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

The principal career ladder pathway is new to the district. HCSD believes that it must develop the leadership of all principals in order to successfully achieve its performance goals. It is important that principals rated Highly Effective and Effective contribute to curriculum development, assessment design, and education policy. Equally as important, principals rated Developing and Ineffective should receive mentoring and other supports from principal leaders to support their development. Due to the small size of the district, leadership activities match the specific skillset of principals, since each demonstrates leadership in different areas. HCSD's principal career ladder pathway was created to provide principals the opportunity to take on a district-wide initiative, allowing them to think about the K-12 system holistically instead of focusing solely on the work within their own building. Principals who meet the requirements for selection and choose to serve in a career ladder pathway position have the opportunity to cultivate their leadership through district-wide initiatives and mentoring experiences.

Future Aspirations for Hudson through Educator Leadership in Career Ladder Pathways

Each teacher and principal career ladder pathway position is designed to attract and develop some of the district's most effective educators into transformational leaders with a K-12 mindset to support the district's ambitious reform agenda. The district believes that there is a direct relationship between the design of career ladder pathways and its ambitious Destination Graduation district goals. Attaining these goals will result in significant increases in student achievement as evidenced by student performance on state and local assessments. As such, teacher and principal leaders will continue to focus on differentiated instruction and the HCSD Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) system. In addition, they will focus on integrating college and career ready standards across all content areas.

The district has every intention of maintaining approximately five Teacher Leader Coach positions. The Teacher Leader Coaches will carry a full teaching load in addition to their added responsibilities as a coach. The district would like to expand these efforts by creating at least one Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) position to be able to establish ongoing math support, much like what they currently have for literacy within the general fund budget. Coaches who continue to teach as well as research best practices and model lessons to address classroom challenges are valued because they have the expertise and credibility to help their colleagues hone their craft. Still, full-time literacy and math coaches who collaborate with teachers and who are dedicated to literacy and math support are considered priority positions to have in the district.

Consistency is the objective of HCSD's vision for the future. The district has begun to reap the benefits of their career ladder pathways positions and would like to continue the work they have started as a result of STLE.

MODEL SUMMARY

Hudson City School District developed career ladder pathways for educators rated Effective and Highly Effective. Career advancement positions were designed to utilize their expertise in leadership roles to support faculty development and improve student outcomes using research-proven teaching and learning methods. The district's career ladder pathways address and integrate the following components of the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (TLE) Continuum: recruitment and placement, induction and mentoring, evaluation, ongoing professional development/professional growth, and performance management.

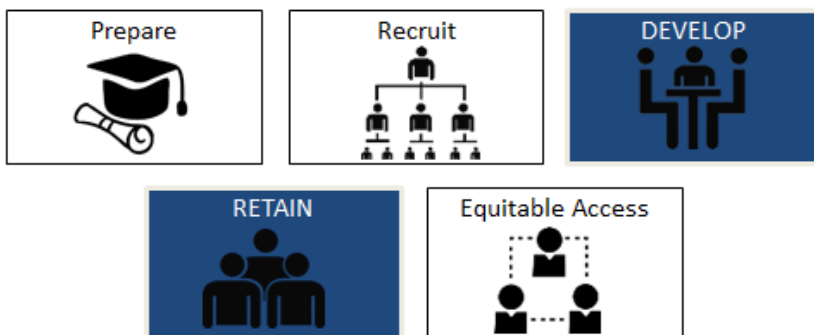
The district established the following teacher and principal leader positions on its career ladder pathway:

- Teacher Leader: Teacher Leader Coach
- Principal Leader: Principal Leader

Hudson City School District's 5 Teacher Leader Coaches assist their peers with applying the New York State (NYS) Teaching Standards, developing curriculum aligned to the college and career ready standards, modeling instructional practices, and using evidence to improve instruction. The district's newly created Principal Leader positions are designed to provide building principals with district-wide experience. The 2 Principal Leaders mentor professional principals and select a district-wide initiative to implement. The Lead Evaluator and a district position supported through STLE, has been designed to support principals within the district in the evaluation process under Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) as well as provide professional development to the faculty at large during K-12 professional development days. In addition, the Lead Evaluator facilitates professional development on the college and career ready standards for teachers who receive a rating of Developing or Ineffective. This position has been vital to the successful implementation of the district career ladder pathways.

The district created and utilizes its Professional Development Plan 2013-16 to help leaders identify the key elements that support a district-wide improvement strategy and to bring these elements into a coherent and integrated relationship. This professional development plan was recently revised to support the district, Board of Education, District Comprehensive Improvement Plan, and School Comprehensive Education Plan goals. Career ladder pathways are critical to helping the district address its needs and meet its goals.

Hudson's CSD's Career Ladder Pathway model addresses the talent management challenges of developing and retaining effective and highly effective educators.



RATIONALE

Professional learning is essential to the district’s school reform efforts. School administrators’ support of shared leadership empowers teacher leaders to contribute to high achieving learning communities and promotes a collaborative school culture. Moreover, teachers who are leaders in their own classrooms help to build a positive school culture and inspire their peers to improve their own instructional practices.

Gap Analysis:

In an initial needs assessment, Hudson CSD identified the following needs:

Student Achievement:

- Improve student achievement by increasing the number of students that demonstrate proficiency on the New York State (NYS) Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Math exams by 2.5%.
- Improve the graduation rate of all students and particularly targeted subgroups (Black or African American, Special Education, and Economically Disadvantaged students), to at least 70% or above.
- Meet or exceed reading proficiency in 55-60% of kindergarten, 65-70% of first grade, and 75-80% of second grade classes.

Talent Management Needs:

- Provide targeted, job-embedded professional development to all teachers to infuse college and career ready standards into all content area instruction and to incorporate differentiation into all lessons.
- Build the capacity of school leaders and provide induction and mentoring for those newly appointed, specifically through increased participation in the Summer Institute.

Design Principles:

In response, Hudson CSD designed career ladder pathways that:

- Extend the influence of the most effective educators throughout the district to students with the highest needs.
- Ensure equity.
- Allow for evidence-based decisions by analyzing longitudinal data and using technology effectively at all levels.
- Are solution focused.
- Expand the scope and impact of the district’s teachers and principals to provide targeted, job-embedded professional development.
- Allow for the development and sharing of expertise.
- Focus on performance.
- Provide significant, meaningful, and sustainable advancement positions.
- Provide for monetary recognition.

TEACHER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Novice Teacher

- Design and deliver lesson plans that align to the district's curriculum scope and sequence.
- Meet targets and goals set by Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).
- Attend meetings and conferences and participate in all professional development as required.
- Meet regularly with a Mentor Teacher.
- Build relationships with students and develop an understanding of community and culture.

Professional Teacher

- All Novice Teacher roles and responsibilities.
- Opportunity to mentor a Novice Teacher.
- Opportunity to mentor a student teacher.
- Opportunity to seek Grade Level Chair or Department Head Position(s).

Teacher Leader

Teacher Leader Coach:

- All Professional Teacher roles and responsibilities.
- Attend monthly Teacher Leader Coach meetings.
- Plan collaboratively with teachers and administrators.
- Present at in-house conferences and workshops.
- Assist teachers with lesson development, instruction aligned to college and career ready standards, and support those on Teacher Improvement Plans.

PRINCIPAL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Novice Principal

- Manage building level responsibilities.
- Serve as instructional leaders in the building.
- Develop community and cultural awareness as well as develop human resource skills.
- Meet targets and goals set for building-level improvement.
- Seek and participate in relevant professional development.

Professional Principal

- All responsibilities for Novice Principal.
- Mentor Novice Principals.
- Conduct professional development for teachers within each building.

Principal Leader

- All responsibilities for Professional Principal.
- Coordinate district-wide initiatives as selected from a menu of options based on student and educator needs.
- Mentor a Professional Principal.
- Eligible to apply for Central Office position, if available.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

1. IDENTIFY

- Identify “Effective” and “Highly Effective” teachers and principals, according to Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).
- Identify high quality teachers and principals who have a history of successful practice.
- Identify teachers and principals who are skillful in the use of data analysis to improve instruction, student learning, and integrated decision making.
- Identify teachers and principals who are respected by their peers and administration.

2. SELECT

- Develop clearly defined job descriptions for each of the teacher and principal leader roles.
- Develop technical, behavioral, and role specific competencies for all teacher leader roles.
- Develop a selection screening tool.
- Communicate teacher leader opportunities to identified teachers.

3. RETAIN

- Create a structure involving intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, as well as formal and informal recognition.
- Develop foundational and role specific professional learning activities to build capacity.
- Create ways for teacher and principal leaders to broaden impact on school improvement.
- Ensure adequate resources are in place to support teacher and principal leaders.
- Provide opportunities for teacher and principal leaders to share best practices.



Beth Barnes, district Math Teacher Leader Coach, facilitates after school professional development on the math modules with teachers during the 2014-15 school year.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EDUCATORS TO LEAD

Implementation of a teacher and principal career ladder pathways model requires preparation for teacher leaders, principal leaders, building staff, and district leaders. The following are suggested practices for effective implementation that have been successful in Hudson City SD:

- Develop building and district-wide improvement plans that include job-embedded professional development.
- Coordinate with educational organizations and institutes of higher learning to provide thorough training for teachers selected as Teacher Leader Coaches.
- Allow consultants or partners adequate time to provide support for teacher leaders that work with their peers to improve the quality of assessments, implement the college and career ready standards, and analyze assessment data.



Stephanie Forsyth, district Lead Evaluator, conducts an observation meeting during the 2014-15 school year.

“We are proud of the work we are doing to improve student outcomes and give our community the school district they deserve. We look forward to a feeling of pride when we can say, “We have met our goals ... now let us set them higher!”

-Maria Suttmeier,
Hudson City School District Superintendent

“With limited administrative staff, we struggle with keeping up with the daily, monthly, and yearly tasks required for a K-12 systemic approach to implementing educational reform. The teacher and principal career ladder pathway positions are all targeted at drawing our most effective educators to a K-12 mindset to support our ambitious reform agenda.”

-From Hudson STLE 3 Application

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The development and implementation of the district’s career ladder pathway began in December 2012 when the Hudson City School District Board of Education formally accepted the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 1 grant. The district ensured that planning and implementation was done in a collaborative manner and included all stakeholders.

Hudson CSD Career Ladder Pathway Implementation Timeline	
December 2012	Notified by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) of STLE 1 grant approval. District received state approval of their Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan.
March 2013	Lead Evaluator started on March 1, 2013. Lead Evaluator conducted classroom observations as well as researched and developed Teacher Leader Coach recruitment and selection criteria.
May 2013	Brought Teacher Leader Coach requirements and job responsibilities to teachers association for review and negotiations. Identified Summer Institute facilitators and sent agendas to all participants.
June 2013	Teachers association provided initial feedback and changes to Teacher Leader Coach requirements. Held Summer Institute sessions.
August 2013	Interview and identify Teacher Leader Coaches. Develop Professional Development Plan with Lead Evaluator.
September 2013	Coordinated with Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) to plan training for Teacher Leader Coaches for the remainder of the 2013-14 school year. Developed Teacher Improvement Plans for teachers in need of improvement.
November 2013	Teacher Leader Coaches began to provide mentoring in buildings as needed.
January 2014	Teacher Leader Coaches had one-on-one training in their buildings with a CASDA coach.
March 2014	Hudson CSD is awarded STLE 3 Grant.
July 2014	Developed Principal Leader application with the president of the administrative unit. Interested Professional Principals applied and met with Superintendent and Coordinator of School Improvement. Lead Principals were approved by July 28, 2014 and began implementing district-wide initiatives.
March 2015	Planning for Summer Institute began.
June 2015	Review and assess effectiveness of initiatives completed through STLE grants.
September 2015	All new Teacher Leader Coach and Lead Principal positions are appointed and or re-appointed.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

HCS D prioritized clear and authentic communication with all district stakeholders throughout the development and implementation of their career ladder pathways. Several meetings with various stakeholders were held to help them understand the purpose of the Strengthening Teacher Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grants and the opportunity it presented to address the district’s needs.

The key to sustaining a culture of teacher leadership is being proactive and cultivating a system of well-trained candidates over an extended period of time. HCS D will commit to a model that continuously develops and retains teacher leaders since their teachers want to be recognized as the professionals they are and given opportunities to demonstrate their expertise. The district is committed to ensuring that teacher and principal leader success in school improvement and student achievement is continuously recognized and celebrated.

Throughout implementation, the district has used a number of communication tools and strategies to ensure that stakeholders remain informed about career ladder pathways.



Emails are used as needed to communicate information about career ladder pathways and STLE to internal and external stakeholders including: central office staff, teachers, principals, parents, and community members.



STLE updates occur frequently at various in-person meetings including: faculty, principal, and Board of Education meetings.



The communications team uses the district’s website and e-newsletter to share updates regularly to all stakeholders.



A forum held during Professional Development Plan Committee meetings allowed teachers the opportunity to ask questions and express concerns and positive thoughts about career ladder pathway positions.



Stephanie Forsyth, district Lead Evaluator, greets new teachers and introduces them to the district Annual Professional Performance Review Process (APPR) process at New Teacher Day in the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Using a set of guiding questions, Hudson City School District thoughtfully considered best practices that would support implementation of their teacher and principal career ladder pathways.



Develop a strategic plan that measures the effectiveness of academic programs and operational systems as well as define opportunities for improvement on an annual basis.



Involve a multitude of stakeholders to ensure that the strategic direction is aligned with community and district values.



Partner with educational partners and local higher education institutions dedicated to building teacher leaders.



Ensure that school-based professional learning is guided by teacher-directed professional development.



Marlene Peduzzi, a data and Response to Intervention (RtI) Teacher Leader Coach, facilitates a professional development session with teachers during the 2014-15 school year.

COST & SUSTAINABILITY

HCS D has used Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grants to fund the development and implementation of career ladder pathways. The district intends to maintain the Teacher Leader Coach positions beyond the life of the grant. Associated costs for these positions are manageable because the district plans to keep the number of Teacher Leader Coaches at five. The district will use information from program evaluation and internal discussions to determine how the principal career ladder pathways might evolve in the future.



Two Teacher Leader Coaches focus on supporting their peers with the integration of technology into their classrooms to increase student engagement and academic performance. Mrs. Parmentier's class, pictured above, is participating in a pilot program to integrate the use of Google Chromebooks into education. Students work through writing and math assignments at their own pace while Mrs. Parmentier walks around to provide support to students.

5
Teacher Leader Coaches



x \$3,000
stipend
= **\$15,000**

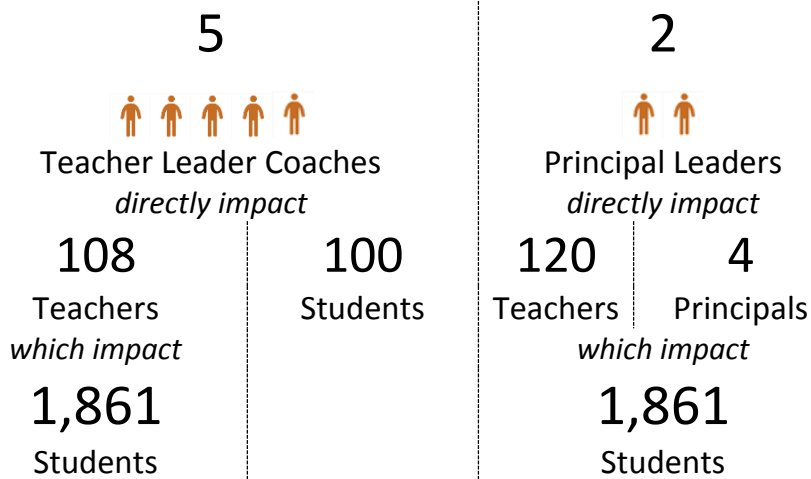
2
Principal Leaders











x \$3,000
stipend
= **\$6,000**

IMPACT

Through career ladder pathways, funded by Strengthening Teacher Leader Effectiveness (STLE), Hudson is seeing positive impacts on teaching and learning that is being facilitated by its teacher and principal leaders. Career ladder pathways provide a structure that fosters a district-wide culture of high expectations and performance, critical to helping the district assess its needs and meet the goals outlined by the district, Board of Education, District Comprehensive Improvement Plan, and School Comprehensive Education Plan.



COST SAVINGS	TIME SAVINGS
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development provided by Teacher Leader Coaches will save the district funds for similar work previously provided by consultants outside the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lead Evaluator, supported by STLE, serves as a coach to teachers during the observation process spending 2.5 to 4.5 hours of direct contact time. Additionally, indirect time is spent researching information on topics to effectively improve instruction. Revisions to the master schedules in order to include time for Teacher Leader Coaches to support their peers as well as meetings outside of the school day, after school, and on the weekends, have maximized teacher and principals' time spent in the classroom.

STUDENT NEEDS ADDRESSED		TEACHER AND LEADER NEEDS ADDRESSED	
	Increased the 4-year graduation rate by 12% from June 2012 to June 2014, demonstrating the district is on track to meet its goal of 15% over 3 years.		Increased the percent of Highly Effective and Effective State-Provided Growth Ratings of educators in the district by 35% from 2012-13 to 2013-14.
	Increased the number of students that demonstrated reading proficiency in grades K-2 by 12% from 2013 to 2014.		Increased participation in the district's Summer Institute by 18% for the 2013-14 school year.
	Increased the number of students that demonstrated proficiency on New York State Grades 3-8 assessments by 3% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 2% in math from 2012-13 to 2013-14.		100% of Teacher Leader Coaches have been retained in their leadership positions after the first year of implementation in 2013-14. Teacher Leader Coaches are providing on-going, targeted support based on evaluation data to over 100 educators.

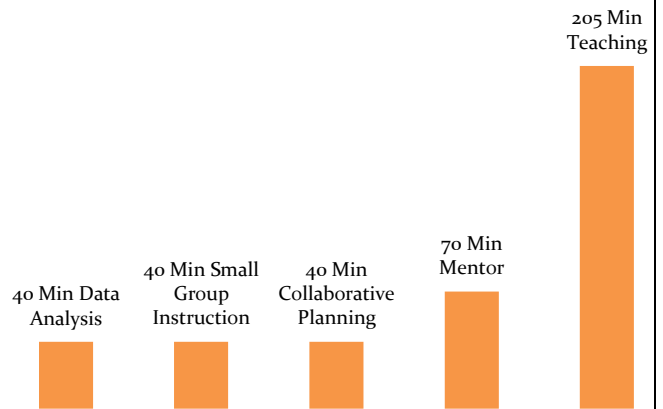
One Day in the Life of: Dr. Julia Coryell Hudson City SD Teacher Leader Coach



**Dr. Julia Coryell, Teacher Leader Coach
K-12 English as a Second Language Teaching and
Learning Coach and Data/Instructional Practices
Hudson City School District**

One Day in the Life: by the minute

- 7:30 AM Extended learning time.
- 8:04 AM Data analysis for pilot Response to Intervention (RtI) assessment.
- 8:40 AM Collaborate with building administrator to discuss professional development and building concerns.
- 9:15 AM Collaborate with teacher(s) to discuss student concerns.
- 9:37 AM Teach high school English as Second Language class with Google Chromebooks.
- 10:22 AM Teach Jr. High English as Second Language class incorporating non-fiction and fiction reading passages. Obtain feedback on new approach to student grouping.
- 11:03 AM Phone discussions with teacher(s).
- 11:10 AM Teach Jr. High English as a Second Language class incorporating non-fiction and fiction reading passages. Obtain feedback on new approach to grouping students.
- 11:46 AM Lunch with teachers. Discussion and Q&A around new grouping approach for differentiated instruction.
- 12:26 PM Teach Jr. High English as a Second Language class incorporating non-fiction and fiction reading passages. Obtain feedback on new approach to grouping students.
- 1:10 PM Teach Jr. High/High school English as Second Language class using Google Chromebooks.
- 1:47 PM Classroom visit to discuss lesson planning with teacher.
- 2:00 PM Respond to emails.
- 2:40 PM Meet with Instructional Support Team
- 4:15 PM Begin final wrap-up before departing for home



Note: The schedule to the left shows how responsibilities fit into a particular day. The bar graph above is an estimation of time spent on typical duties and may not reflect the exact schedule provided.

Opportunities for professional growth

Here are a few of the ways that Dr. Julia Coryell is developing her teaching and leadership skills:

Implementation Planning



Teacher Leaders attend the district's Summer Institute and receive targeted professional development provided by The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) and Questar III Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to prepare for their role.

One-on-One Support



The Teacher Leader Coaches meet individually with the Coordinator of School Improvement to obtain feedback regarding their strengths and weaknesses and discuss their opportunities for individual growth, in addition to receiving one-on-one training from a CASDA coach.

Communities



Teacher Leader Coaches meet regularly to network and support one another. They are also provided the opportunity to attend external professional development, allowing them to address their areas in need of improvement and continually grow in their role.