

2025-2026 Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant COACHING FOR EXCELLENCE Grant

Full RFP

The online application is available to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) through the [NYSED Business Portal](#). Select the survey titled “2025-26 Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant (Coaching for Excellence).”

Project Purpose

For the 2025-26 school year, the New York State Education Department (NYSED or “the Department”) is providing Target Districts with schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), the opportunity to receive funding to support the employment of an instructional coach to allow the school to participate in the NYSED Coaching for Excellence Supplemental Support program.

Eligibility

Coaching for Excellence: Foundational Funding

Target Districts with at least one non-Receiverhsip school in the CSI or ATSI support model are eligible to [submit an application](#) for the 2025-26 Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant (SIG) Coaching for Excellence (CFE) funds to support the participation of the school identified for the CSI or ATSI support model in the CFE: Foundational path of CFE if the following criteria are met:

1. The specific school has registered for the CFE: Foundational path.
2. The specific school ensures the person identified for the instructional coach position meets the criteria below:
 - the individual identified has not served as an administrator during the 2023-24 or 2024-25 school years;
 - the individual identified has at least one year of experience within the school identified for the CSI or ATSI model AND a total of five years of teaching experience.
3. The school agrees to address before September 2, 2025, any staffing needs that arise from moving the teacher to the instructional coach position.
4. The school is familiar with the [Coaching for Excellence Program Theory of Action](#)
5. The school agrees to fulfill the [Coaching for Excellence Program Participation Expectations](#)

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Only schools identified for CSI and ATSI that are not under Receivership are eligible for this grant to support the employment of an instructional coach. **A school does not have to receive funding through this grant to participate in CFE: Foundational.**

Coaching for Excellence: Elevate Funding

Target Districts with at least one non-Receivership school in the CSI or ATSI support model that participated in the NYSED CFE program during the 2024-25 school year are eligible to submit an application for the 2025-26 Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant (SIG) Coaching for Excellence (CFE) funds to support the participation of the school identified for the CSI or ATSI support model in the CFE: Elevate path of CFE and to support the continued employment of 2024-25 CFE coaches if the following criteria are met:

1. The coach that participated in the 2024-25 CFE program continues as at least a 1.0 FTE instructional coach at the school.
2. The school has enrolled the coach in the CFE: Elevate path.
3. The school agrees to fulfil the [Coaching for Excellence Program Participation Expectations](#).

Only schools identified for CSI and ATSI that are not under Receivership are eligible for this grant to support the employment of an instructional coach. **A school does not have to receive funding through this grant to participate in CFE: Elevate.**

Funding

The Department will provide Districts with up to \$125,000 in funding to support the salary and benefits for the employment of the 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) instructional coach that participates in CFE: Foundational or CFE: Elevate.

The funding available may only support the costs associated with the coach's salary and benefits. Although an individual participant's salary and benefits for the instructional coaching position may be less than \$125,000, the CFE grant cannot be applied to other school activities. However, reasonable and necessary resources to support the success of an instructional coach may be covered through the SIG Basic grant.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations, any participant identified for funding through this grant that was an instructional coach in 2024-25 AND funded through state/local (i.e., general) funds last year MUST have at a minimum the same amount of their salary funded through state/local funds in 2025-26.

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A school is eligible to have up to two 1.0 FTE instructional coaches participate in the CFE Supplemental Support program provided that at least one of the coaches is enrolled in CFE: Elevate.

Project Period

July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026

For any FS-10 submitted, please use the project code provided in the NYSED programmatic approval email. The 2025-26 Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant (Coaching for Excellence) project number stem is 0011-26-4xxx.

Application Deadline

Completed **CFE Program Applications are due by July 15, 2025. No extensions will be provided.** Schools that have not finalized coverage of a new CFE coach's existing responsibility (e.g., hired a replacement teacher) will be granted conditional programmatic approval; however, their application will not be sent to the Grants Finance office until coverage is finalized (e.g. the replacement teacher is hired). To mitigate instability in classroom staffing and ensure a smooth start to the school year for students, after Monday, September 1, 2025, applications will no longer be eligible for review and approval. At that point, any school that has not finalized coverage for the CFE: Foundational coach will be ineligible to receive CFE grant funding to support their coach's participation. Substitute teacher coverage will not be accepted as an appropriate means of covering the coach's existing responsibilities.

LEAs are encouraged to submit completed applications as soon as possible to expedite the review and approval process.

Submission Instructions

To initiate the programmatic review process for this grant, eligible Districts must submit a **blue ink signed** Application Cover Page; Statement of Assurances and Expectations; and a School-Level Plan for each participating school to fieldsupport@nysed.gov by **July 15, 2025**.

Districts that receive programmatic approval will be provided a Project Code for the FS-10 and assigned access for submission through the NYSED Business portal.

For additional information or assistance please contact: fieldsupport@nysed.gov

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Coaching for Excellence Program Theory of Action

The Office of Accountability's Field Support Services designed the Coaching for Excellence program using an evidence base supporting the benefits of Instructional Coaching¹ and the following Theory of Action:

IF the New York State Education Department (NYSED):

- Delivers comprehensive, research-based training in instructional coaching with an emphasis on the components of high-quality instruction;
- Offers ongoing guidance, coaching, and opportunities for Instructional Coaches to engage in learning communities;

AND IF:

- The Instructional Coach is a skilled educator with deep knowledge of rigorous, standards-aligned instruction and is familiar with the specific learning needs of the school community;
- The Coach regularly supports a caseload of at least ten teachers who voluntarily engage in sustained, classroom-embedded coaching focused on improving instructional planning, delivery, and student outcomes;
- The Coach's schedule protects time for observing instruction, co-planning, co-teaching, and providing actionable feedback aligned to high-quality instructional practices;
- The Coach actively connects their work to the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), ensuring that coaching is a lever for implementing evidence-based instructional strategies;

AND IF:

- The Principal strategically fills the Coach's former classroom position to maintain or elevate instructional quality schoolwide;
- The Principal clearly communicates that the purpose of coaching is to strengthen instruction through partnership, not evaluation;
- The Principal and Coach collaborate to create and sustain a shared instructional vision grounded in rigorous thinking, high expectations and equity;

THEN:

Instructional capacity at CSI and ATSI schools will grow, leading to more consistent implementation of high-quality, rigorous instruction across classrooms — and ultimately, improved student engagement, learning, and achievement.

¹ For additional information, see: Matthew A. Kraft, David Blazar, Dylan Hogan. [The Effect of Teacher Coaching on Instruction and Achievement: A Meta-Analysis of the Causal Evidence](#) *Review of Educational Research*, November 2016

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Coaching for Excellence Program Application Cover Page

District:	BEDS Code:
Address:	
Program Contact Person:	Telephone:
Address of Contact:	
E-mail Address:	Fax:

I hereby certify I am the chief school officer of the applicant LEA and that the information contained in this Application is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate. I further certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, Application guidelines and instructions, attached Assurances and Certifications, and that the requested budget amounts are necessary for the implementation of this project. It is also understood by the applicant that immediate written notice will be provided to the grant program office if at any time the applicant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

It is understood by the applicant that this Application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by the NYS Education Department or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. It is also understood by the applicant that immediate written notice will be provided to the grant program office if at any time the applicant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

Authorized Signature of Chief School/Administrative Officer (**in blue ink**)

Typed Name:	Date:
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Program Application Packet Checklist

A complete Program Application consists of the following:

	Item	Checked Applicant	Checked NYSED
1.	Cover Page (1 per District)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Completed and Signed Application Statement of Assurances (1 per District)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	CFE: Foundational: School-Level Plan (1 per school) A. School Steps B. School Narrative C. School Information Form D. School Signature Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	CFE: Elevate: School-Level Plan (1 per school) A. School Steps B. School Narrative C. School Information Form D. School Signature Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Incomplete Applications will be returned for revision. To be eligible to participate, Districts must have submitted a completed Application by **July 15, 2025**.

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Application Statement of Assurances

In order for the District to receive funds under the Title I 1003 School Improvement Grant Coaching for Excellence Program, compliance with the following statements must be attested to by the superintendent and the representative of the teachers' collective bargaining organization:

- The plan and budget have been developed in accordance with the provisions of Article Fourteen of the Civil Service Law; that is, cooperative planning occurred, and all plan components have been agreed upon by the superintendent of schools (or a representative) and the representative of the teachers' collective bargaining organization. Any amendments to the approved budget also will be developed in accordance with Article Fourteen of the Civil Service Law.
- The applicant agency hereby applies for a grant of federal funds to provide educational activities as set forth in this Application.

Coaching for Excellence Program Participant Expectations

The following are participation requirements for all Foundational and Elevate coaching participants:

Introductory Requirements:

- In-person meeting between NYSED coach, principal, and instructional coach at the participating school to develop a plan to align their vision for instruction and plan for the upcoming year (July/August)
- Fall full-day Whole Group Convening in Albany (September 9, 2025)
- In-person Coach the Coach Session at the participating school (September)

Additional Requirements:

- **A minimum of:**
 - 3 Coach the Coach Virtual Meetings
 - 3 additional in-person Coach the Coach Sessions at the participating school
 - 3 In-Person Regional Convenings
 - 3 Individual Virtual Check-in sessions

In addition, the participating school will ensure that the coach can fully participate by providing the following assurances:

- The instructional coach's time and responsibilities will be reserved for instructional coaching. The coach will not be utilized for "coverages" except in extreme circumstances.

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- The instructional coach will not have any teaching responsibilities for the 2025-26 school year.
- A minimum of 10 teachers are committed to participating in peer coaching during the 2025-26 school year.
- The principal will collaborate with instructional coach to ensure that their vision for instruction is aligned.
- The instructional coach is actively involved with SCEP (CEP) implementation.
- The district will obtain for each coach a copy of [*Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-based Coaches, Second Edition by Joellen Killian and Cindy Harrison*](#) and [*Arise by Elena Aguilar*](#), two books that will be used throughout the year as part of the NYSED Coaching for Excellence program.
- The school has completed the following sequence of required steps prior to the submission of the application:
 1. School leadership reviews and confirms commitment to the Coaching for Excellence Theory of Action and Program Expectations.
 2. School leadership presents to staff the opportunity to add an instructional coach and emphasizes the role of the coach as a support, not an evaluator.
 3. School leadership solicits interest among staff and confirms that there are at least ten staff interested in being coached.
 4. School leadership communicates interest to District leaders that the school would like to pursue this opportunity.

Name of District	
School(s) to participate in this Grant	
Name of Superintendent	
Signature of Superintendent	
Name of Teachers' Collective Bargaining Organization Representative	
Signature of Teachers' Collective Bargaining Organization Representative	

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**CFE: Foundational Program Application: School-Level Plan
(complete 1 per school)**

The School-Level Plan consists of four components:

- A. School Steps
- B. School Narrative
- C. School Information Form
- D. School Signature Page

Districts with multiple participating schools should duplicate the pages in the School-Level Plan and have each school complete its own School-Level Plan. All submissions must be received by **July 15, 2025**.

CFE: Foundational Part A: School Steps

Eligible schools will need to complete four steps in the order listed below. Schools should identify when these steps occurred in the space below. Any sections below that are incomplete will result in this section being returned for revision.

Name of School	
Step	Date(s) Step Occurred
1. School leadership reviews and confirms commitment to the Coaching for Excellence Theory of Action and Program Expectations .	
2. School leadership presents to staff the opportunity to add an instructional coach and emphasizes the role of the coach as a support, not an evaluator.	
3. School leadership solicits interest among staff and confirms that there are at least ten staff interested in participating in peer coaching.	
4. School leadership communicates interest to District leaders that the school would like to pursue this opportunity.	

After schools have completed these steps and begin identifying potential staff members that can serve as an instructional coach for one year, the New York State Education Department **strongly recommends** that the school considers the qualities below as part of their identification process:

- *The Instructional Coach has strong interpersonal skills;*

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- *The Instructional Coach is someone that intends to remain as a teacher at the school after serving as an Instructional Coach;*
- *The Instructional Coach has an understanding of adult learning theory;*
- *The Instructional Coach is respected by their current colleagues;*
- *The Instructional Coach has demonstrated success as a classroom teacher;*
- *The Instructional Coach has a thorough understanding of instructional practices that deepen student thinking;*

Schools may also find the ASCD article, [Seven Qualities of an Instructional Coach](#), helpful.

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CFE: Foundational Part B: School Narrative

Participating schools must provide a response to each of the items below that indicates that the school is committed to instructional coaching as a means of schoolwide improvement and in a manner consistent with the [Coaching for Excellence Program Theory of Action](#). Any questions below that are incomplete will result in this section being returned for revision.

1. Who has been identified as the Instructional Coach?
2. What was that person's role at the school prior to 2025-26?
3. What will the school do to address the coach leaving the role identified in #2?
4. If the response for #3 involves an additional teacher, has that person been identified/hired? If so, what is their name?
5. Describe why this individual was chosen as your Instructional Coach, including their instructional expertise, knowledge of your school community, and leadership capacity?
6. Describe what coaching at this school looked like in 2024-25.
7. Describe the steps the school leadership took to determine that at least 10 teachers were interested in participating in a peer coaching model?

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8. Please confirm that both the coach and the principal are aware that a NYSED representative will arrange an on-site meeting with them during the summer to answer any questions, outline expectations of the program, and discuss how to introduce the coach when staff return at the start of the 2025-26 school year.
9. Please confirm that the principal and coach are aware that coaches that participate in the CFE Foundational are required to attend an in-person kickoff event on September 9, 2025, tentatively scheduled to occur in Albany, NY.
10. Please confirm that the principal is aware of the district responsibility to cover travel expenses. Schools may use SIG BASIC funding to cover the required travel expenses associated with participating in the CFE program.

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CFE: Foundational Part C: School Information Form (complete 1 per school)

Schools will need to ensure that at least ten teachers will participate in peer coaching in order to participate in the program. All schools must identify the ten teachers willing to be coached as part of the application.

School Name	
Enrollment	
Number of School-Based Instructional Coaches in 2024-25	
Amount of CFE grant requested (Up to \$125,000).	
CFE: Foundational Coach's Name	
Years of Experience at the school	
Years of Teaching Experience Total	
CFE: Foundational coach's role during the 2023-24 school year	
CFE: Foundational coach's role during the 2024-25 school year	

Teacher Name to be Coached	Grade and/or Subject Area
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

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CFE: Foundational Part D: School Signature Page

Participating schools must include the signature of the Principal and the School's Teacher Collective Bargaining Organization Representative (i.e. "Chapter Leader" or designee) indicating agreement with the following attestations:

1. The information contained in the School-Level Plan is accurate.
2. Our school will abide by the [Coaching for Excellence Program Participation Expectations](#).
3. Our school meets the [Eligibility Criteria](#).
4. Our school has enrolled in CFE: Foundational
5. Our school will ensure that the individual identified as the instructional coach:
 - a. the individual identified has at least one year experience within the school identified for CSI or ATSI model AND five years' experience total.

Name of Participating School	
Name of Principal	
Email of Principal	
Signature of Principal	
Name of Coaching For Excellence Participant	
Email of Coaching For Excellence Participant	
Signature of Coaching For Excellence Participant	
Name of School Teachers' Collective Bargaining Organization Representative	
Signature of School Teachers' Collective Bargaining Organization Representative	

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CFE: Elevate Program Application: School-Level Plan

The School-Level Plan consists of four components:

1. School Steps
2. School Narrative
3. School Information Form
4. School Signature Page

Districts with multiple participating schools should duplicate the pages in the School-Level Plan and have each school complete its own School-Level Plan. All submissions must be received by **July 15, 2025**.

CFE: Elevate Part A: School Steps

Eligible schools will need to complete four steps in the order listed below. Schools should identify when these steps occurred in the space below. Any sections below that are incomplete will result in this section being returned for revision.

Name of School		
	Step	Date(s) Step Occurred
	1. School leadership reviews and confirms commitment to the Coaching for Excellence Theory of Action and Program Expectations .	
	2. School leadership presents to staff the opportunity to continue with an instructional coach and emphasizes the role of the coach as a support, not an evaluator.	
	3. School leadership solicits interest among staff and confirms that there remain at least ten staff interested in participating in peer coaching.	
	4. School leadership communicates interest to District leaders that the school would like to continue this opportunity.	

CFE: Elevate Part B: School Narrative

Participating schools must provide a response to each of the items below that indicates that the school is committed to instructional coaching as a means of schoolwide improvement and in a manner consistent with the [Coaching for Excellence Program Theory of Action](#). Any questions below that are incomplete will result in this section being returned for revision.

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1. Please confirm that both the coach and the principal are aware that a NYSED representative will arrange an on-site meeting with them during the summer to plan for the upcoming year.
2. Please confirm that the principal and coach are aware that coaches that participate in the CFE: Foundational are required to attend an in-person kickoff event on September 9, 2025, tentatively scheduled to occur in Albany, NY.
3. Please confirm that the principal is aware of the district responsibility to cover travel expenses. Schools are able to use SIG BASIC funding to cover the required travel expenses associated with participating in the CFE program.

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CFE: Elevate Part C: School Information Form (complete 1 per school)

The Department will provide Districts with funding to support 2024-25 CFE coaches further their professional learning through the Elevate path and continue their employment **as instructional coaches at the same school** for the 2025-26 school year.

- For schools that are in the CSI or ATSI model that continue to employ the 2024-25 CFE Foundational or Elevate participant as an instructional coach during the 2025-26 school year, the Department will provide up to \$125,000 in funding to support the salary and benefits for the employment of the 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) instructional coach in conjunction with participation in the CFE: Elevate.

To be eligible, the 2024-25 CFE participant MUST remain as an instructional coach at the same school in 2025-26 and the coach must participate in CFE: Elevate. To apply for this funding, please complete the chart below. Add additional charts as needed.

School Name	
Current School Support Model (e.g., CSI, ATSI)	
2024-25 Coaching for Excellence Participant(s)	
Amount of CFE grant requested (Up to \$125,000).	
Teacher Name to be Coached	Grade and/or Subject Area
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

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CFE: Elevate School Signature Page

Participating schools must include the signature of the Principal and the School's Teacher Collective Bargaining Organization Representative (i.e. "Chapter Leader" or designee) indicating agreement with the following attestations:

1. The information contained in the application is accurate.
2. Our school will abide by the [Coaching for Excellence Program Participation Expectations](#).
3. Our school meets the [Eligibility Criteria](#).
4. Our school has enrolled in the CFE Elevate.
5. Our school will ensure that the individual identified as the instructional coach will remain as an instructional coach in 2025-26 and participate fully in CFE: Elevate.

Name of Participating School	
Name of Principal	
Email of Principal	
Signature of Principal	
Name of Coaching For Excellence Participant	
Email of Coaching For Excellence Participant	
Signature of Coaching For Excellence Participant	