

Jamestown City School District

Region: Buffalo

Motto: We see every child learning every day!

Awards: Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness 3

Superintendent: Mr. Tim O. Mains



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.

JAMESTOWN 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



10

Teachers in the District



429

Principals in the District



9

Turnover Rate of Teachers with Fewer than Five Years of Experience



17%

*2012-13 data

Turnover Rate of all Teachers

10%

*2012-13 data

State-Provided Growth Ratings

Ineffective

1

(17%)

Developing

6

(6%)

Effective

83

(87%)

Highly Effective

5

(5%)

Student Enrollment



4,911

Per Pupil Expenditure



\$8,574.00

*2012-13 data

Students by Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaska Native

18

(0%)

Black or African American

204

(4%)

Hispanic or Latino

943

(19%)

Asian or Native Hawaiian/
Other Pacific Islander

20

(0%)

White

3,268

(67%)

Multiracial

458

(9%)

Other Student Groups

Limited English Proficient Students

226

(5%)

Students with Disabilities

595

(12%)

Economically Disadvantaged Students

3,286

(67%)

Eligible for Free Lunch

2,806

(57%)

Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch

218

(4%)

OVERARCHING VISION

Jamestown City School District (JCS D), located in the Buffalo region, is a Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 3 recipient of \$623,067. Educators in Jamestown have developed career ladder pathways opportunities for teachers and principals to create a culture of shared leadership that spans across 9 schools, 4,911 students, and 429 teachers.

Original Vision Outlined at the Start of the STLE Grant Period

The largest school district in Chautauqua County, Jamestown is a High Need/Resource Capacity (RC) Urban/Suburban district that had an Extraordinary Needs Index score of 65.4, and a district-wide free and reduced price lunch eligibility rate of 70.61% at the time they applied for the STLE 3 grant. As a result of widespread underperformance among multiple subgroups, representing over 70% of the total student enrollment, the district elected to designate every school a Focus School as part of an overall comprehensive school improvement plan.

In developing their career ladder pathways model through the STLE 3 grant, Jamestown recognized that many teachers and leaders in the district had been challenged to fully understand and adjust to the significant scope of change reflected in the Regents Reform Agenda. In order to support the alignment of higher quality teaching and evidence-based instructional practices to more rigorous college and career ready standards and curricula, Jamestown envisioned career ladder pathways in which their highest performing teachers and leaders would develop specific expertise in one of the three key elements of school improvement: college and career ready standards and curriculum, evidence-based instruction, and effective instructional practices. By developing the expertise of Teacher and Principal Leaders and fostering leadership through collaboration, they anticipated that their highest performing teachers would further develop their own capacity while supporting their colleagues to do the same.

Prior to the STLE 3 grant, the district's efforts to elevate teachers to a role of peer leadership were informal and primarily focused on assigning mentors to novice teachers. This is still an element of Jamestown's career ladder pathways, however, using STLE 3 grant funds, the district seeks to develop a more comprehensive system of job-embedded professional development, wherein all educators in the system receive the support they need to strengthen their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. As a result, they expect to increase the likelihood that every child benefits from high quality teaching and learning to support their academic success.

Current Status of Career Ladder Pathways

Jamestown began to implement career ladder pathways in the 2014-15 academic school year that reflect their vision to have teacher leaders in every school. They district found a gap between this vision and the reality of their current capacity and systemic readiness for teacher leadership. While many educators in the district meet the selection criteria for a teacher leader role, few educators possess the confidence in their ability or capacity to serve as a peer leader. Several applicants acknowledged or indicated that they are still learning about the new standards and curriculum, do not yet have a solid grasp on the essential elements of a systemic response to intervention program, or are concerned about having the time or confidence to take on additional responsibilities for coaching their peers, while maintaining a full-time teaching load. As a result, Jamestown experienced fewer applicants than anticipated for career ladder pathways positions.

In response to this challenge, Jamestown adjusted their career ladder pathways model to include two Instructional Coaches, full-release teachers, that will provide comprehensive coaching and support to teachers in kindergarten through grade six. Additionally, they selected Peer Coaches, full-time practicing teachers, in all elementary schools to provide similar coaching and support to colleagues within the building. Both district-level and school-level teacher leaders support all elements of their improvement goals, including curriculum and

instruction aligned with the college and career ready standards, driven by data to inform and improve student learning. In addition, the district continuously recruits and develops Mentor Teachers to provide coaching and feedback to teachers new to the profession or those developing their practice. On the principal career ladder pathway, Principal Mentors provide individual and small-group support to novice and experienced principals. The district is currently recruiting Principal Coaches that will provide leadership and support to other principals seeking to strengthen their instructional leadership skills as well as create a video library for principals across the district. Jamestown is committed to drawing upon and developing the capacity of their current leaders while continuing to recruit and develop others to share their talent and expertise.

Future Aspirations for Jamestown through Educator Leadership in Career Ladder Pathways

The district recognizes the challenges associated with assigning additional leadership responsibilities to those who maintain a full teaching or administrative assignment and believe this to be one of the primary factors behind their difficulty attracting candidates for some of their career ladder pathways positions. They expect that an ideal scenario might be to assign full-release coaches to each building; however, they currently do not have the available resources necessary to achieve this flexibility.

Going forward, in order to strengthen and sustain their career ladder pathways vision, Jamestown aims to support partial-release positions, with the expectation that this will encourage more highly skilled educators to seek a leadership role with the time needed to fulfill the additional responsibilities of an educator leader. In the short term, the district will continue to identify, recruit, and develop those educators who demonstrate the potential for teacher leadership, so that they can realize their initial vision of three or more teacher leaders in every school. With more hands available to support the work of leadership and learning, Jamestown hopes to lessen the demands on any one individual to allow the entire system to grow as a result of collaboration and shared leadership.

MODEL SUMMARY

The **Jamestown City School District** has developed and implemented career ladder pathways positions for teachers and principals to build systemic capacity to enhance educator effectiveness by providing individualized support for educators seeking improvement. The district's career ladder pathways address and integrate the following components of the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (TLE) Continuum: induction and mentoring, evaluation, ongoing professional development/professional growth, and performance management.

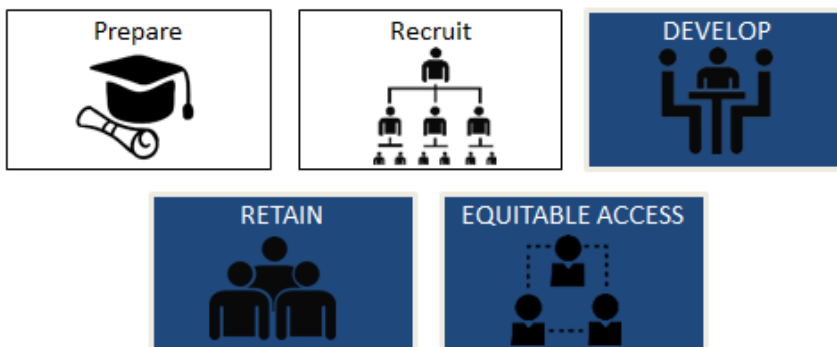
The district established the following teacher and principal leader positions on its career ladder pathways:

- Professional Teacher: Mentor Teacher
- Teacher Leader: Instructional Coach and Peer Coach
- Professional Principal: Principal Mentor
- Principal Leader: Principal Coach

The district's 10 Mentor Teachers assist their peers with applying the New York State (NYS) Teaching Standards and Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) for continuous improvement. Additionally, 8 Peer Coaches and 2 Instructional Coaches further support their colleagues to design and implement college and career ready aligned curriculum and use evidence-based instruction. The Principal Mentor and Principal Coaches support and coach other principals to strengthen their practice as instructional leaders.

Teacher Leaders provide individualized and small group support to teachers. They have also collaborated and engaged with building and district administrators to support professional learning for all instructional staff. Through this model, Jamestown CSD hopes to create a high-performing district culture of shared leadership, wherein teachers and leaders work collaboratively to continuously improve educator effectiveness and high levels of learning for all students and staff.

Jamestown's Career Ladder Pathways model addresses the talent management challenges of developing, retaining, and providing equitable access to effective and highly effective educators.



RATIONALE

Professional learning is essential to Jamestown’s school reform efforts. Through implementation of career ladder pathways, the district seeks to develop a more comprehensive system of job-embedded professional development. The goal is to ensure wherein all educators in the system receive the support they need to strengthen their content knowledge and pedagogical skills to increase the likelihood that *every* child in Jamestown benefits from high quality teaching and learning to support their academic success.

Gap Analysis:

In an initial assessment, Jamestown identified the following needs:

Student Achievement:

- Reduce the number of schools designated as a Focus School from 100% in 2013-14 by accelerating student growth and closing achievement gaps.
- Increase the percent of students in grades 3-8 who are proficient in the college and career ready standards for their grade level from 20% in 2013-14.
- Adequately support the increasing population of economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with specialized learning needs.
- Address the correlation between schools with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities with the lowest scores on grades 3-8 English Language Arts and math state exams, as well as Regents exams and graduation rates.

Talent Management Needs:

- Provide targeted, job-embedded professional development to ensure that the highest need students have access to the most effective teachers.
- Build the capacity of school leaders and provide induction and mentoring for those newly appointed.
- Address variability in teaching skills.
- Develop formal and consistent selection processes and clear expectations for teacher leaders.

Design Principles:

In response to these needs, Jamestown designed career ladder pathways that:

- Extend the influence of the most effective educators throughout the district to students with the highest needs.
- Ensure equity.
- Are grounded in evidence-based decision making.
- Are solution focused.
- Expand the scope and impact of the district’s teachers and principals to provide targeted, job-embedded professional development.
- Allow educators to develop and share expertise.
- Are focused on performance.
- Include significant and meaningful advancement positions.
- Provide monetary recognition.

TEACHER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Novice Teacher

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Teacher Association Contract.

Professional Teacher

Mentor Teacher:

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Teacher Association Contract.
- Assist individual probationary and teachers in need of formative assistance in developing sound pedagogical skills.
- Provide individual coaching of novice or experienced teachers.
- Conduct non-evaluative lesson observations with verbal and written feedback, using video observation where available.

Teacher Leader

Peer Coach:

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Teacher Association Contract
- Provide leadership and support to individuals and small groups seeking to strengthen their pedagogical skills, align curriculum to college and career ready standards, and use data to improve student learning outcomes.

Instructional Coach:

- Full-release Teachers on Special Assignment who provide individual and school-wide support for colleagues working to improve their practice; addressing 3 key priorities: lesson observation and feedback aligned to the Framework for Teaching and Common Core practice guides, planning and instructional practices alignment to college and career ready standards for English Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics, as well as use evidence of student performance to plan effective and strategic interventions to improve student learning.
- Extend the reach of building-level peer coaches by providing additional building support as needed.

PRINCIPAL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Novice Principal

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Principal Association Contract.

Professional Principal

Principal Mentor:

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Principal Association Contract.
- Assist individual probationary and principals in need of formative assistance in developing sound pedagogical skills.
- Provide individual and small group support to novice or experienced building leaders related: to creating a shared mission, vision, values and goals; administrative responsibilities; curriculum and instruction; use of data to improve student learning; and family and community engagement.

Principal Leader

Principal Coach:

- Fulfill all professional responsibilities per Jamestown Principal Association Contract.
- Provide leadership and support to other principals seeking to strengthen their instructional leadership skills.
- Facilitate planning meetings, focused on goal setting, action planning, and time management strategies.
- Conduct school visitations for observation of principal practice, with feedback and debriefing.
- Capture his/her own practice on video capture to create a video library for professional growth among current and prospective principals.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

1. IDENTIFY

- Identify teachers rated “Effective” and “Highly Effective” according to Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).
- Identify high quality teachers and principals who have a history of successful practice and demonstrated leadership skills.
- Identify teachers and principals who are skillful in the use of data analysis to drive instruction, student learning, and integrated decision making.
- Identify educators 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 and principal leader roles.
- Communicate teacher and principal leader opportunities to eligible educators.

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 and share best practices.
- Ensure adequate resources are in place to support teacher and principal leaders.
- Continuously review the effectiveness of teacher and principal leaders according to APPR.



District Instructional Coach, Chad Bongiovanni, confers with Math Coordinator, Denise Pusateri, as they plan to support classroom teachers with implementation of EngageNY curriculum modules.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EDUCATORS TO LEAD

Implementation of Jamestown’s career ladder pathways model requires preparation for teacher leaders, principal leaders, building staff, principals, and district leaders. The following are suggested best practices for effective implementation:

- Dedicate time for initial training and professional development for teacher and principal leaders as they relate to roles assigned by the district.
- Ensure time for collaboration between administration, teachers, and teacher leaders.
- Encourage collegial participation by including teacher leaders in school-level decision making.
- Address the specific skill sets and diverse backgrounds of teacher leaders.
- Maintain transparency and articulate clearly defined roles and responsibilities for teacher and principal leaders.



Melissa Forster, Peer Coach at Abraham Lincoln Elementary School, develops her students’ number sense and counting strategies during a kindergarten math lesson in the 2014-15 school year.

“Since we wish to create a district where every child is learning every day, we will need to monitor our progress along the way to realize this vision. Intelligent generation and use of data is essential. Data needs to be used not as a hammer, but as a flashlight – showing us what we have and have not accomplished, so that we can make adjustments to our plans. The data should be easy to acquire, understandable and actionable. Since we don’t all have equal facility in our work with data, this will be a learning opportunity for us.”

-Tim O. Mains
Superintendent, Jamestown City Schools

“Teacher and Principal Leaders will provide individualized and small group support to individuals and teams of teachers. Teacher Leaders will also collaborate and engage with building and district administrators to support professional learning for all instructional staff. By working together to sustain professional growth, we will contribute to a high-performing district culture of shared leadership, wherein teachers and leaders work collaboratively to continuously improve educator effectiveness and high levels of learning for students and staff.”

-From Jamestown’s STLE 3 Application

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Beginning in March 2014, with the acceptance of the Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 3 grant, Jamestown gathered multiple stakeholders together to collaboratively plan initiatives for the grant period. The following table outlines key tasks that will be carried out during the two year grant period. The district plans to continue STLE initiatives beyond the grant period as part of its strategic planning process.

Jamestown City School District Career Ladder Pathways Implementation Timeline	
March 2014	Awarded Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 3 grant. Established labor-management collaboration. Planned and scheduled professional development activities for those serving in new teacher and principal leader roles.
April 2014	Announced career ladder pathways initiative through various means to promote awareness of opportunities.
May 2014	Collected applications from eligible candidates for teacher and principal leader roles.
June 2014	Selection committee consisting of district leaders reviewed applications and previous evaluation data to select teacher and principal leaders for assigned roles.
July – August 2014	Teacher and principal leaders participated in professional development. Mentor Teachers assigned to new teachers and those in need of support. Teacher, principal, and district leaders identified needs and goals to plan professional development for the upcoming school year.
September 2014	Teacher and principal leaders introduced to all faculty and staff. Principals outlined school professional development plan and explained roles of teacher leaders to their building faculties.
November 2014	Reviewed artifacts and contact logs to assess the level and consistency of support provided to date as well as identify further areas in need of professional development.
January 2015	Administered a survey to solicit feedback and input from staff to assess the level and consistency of support provided to date. Feedback was utilized to identify professional development needs.
February 2015	Provided on-going professional development for teacher and principal leaders specific to their assigned roles.
April 2015	Complete evaluations of teacher and principal leaders to assess their effectiveness in providing individualized and school-wide support and professional development.
May – June 2015	Collect applications from eligible candidates for teacher and principal leader roles to fill vacancies and additional positions. Review initiatives started under STLE grant to determine effectiveness.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Jamestown prioritized clear and authentic communication with all district stakeholders throughout the development and implementation of their career ladder pathways.

Since Jamestown did not have career ladder pathways in place prior to receiving Strengthening Teacher and Leader (STLE) grant funds, it was essential that the district inform all stakeholders of program development and implementation to ensure thorough understanding of the opportunities for leadership as well as the supports to be provided for improved educator effectiveness.

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



A brief description of the grant award was included in the budget news release, published in April 2014.



The communications team uses the district's website and email to regularly share updates.



Multiple face-to-face meetings during both planning and implementation keep stakeholders updated on progress, including department, grade level, faculty, and Board of Education meetings.



District created a survey to get detailed feedback from teachers receiving support from teacher and principal leaders.



Christina Spontaneo, Peer Coach at Samuel G. Love Elementary School, develops her students' number sense during a fourth grade math lesson. Peer Coaches share their instructional experience and expertise with their colleagues during individual and small group planning sessions.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Using a set of guiding questions, Jamestown thoughtfully considered promising practices that would support implementation of their teacher and principal career ladder pathways.



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



Reallocate resources as necessary to sustainably fund implementation of career ladder pathways.



Collaborate with teacher and principal associations to define teacher and principal leader roles and responsibilities, as well as selection criteria and processes.



Develop a robust set of professional development offerings for teachers and principal leaders that will serve as a strong foundation for the work to be accomplished.



Amanda Sischo, Peer Coach at Clinton V. Bush Elementary School, leads a discussion among grade level colleagues during a summer workshop to strengthen implementation of college and career ready aligned English Language Arts curriculum.

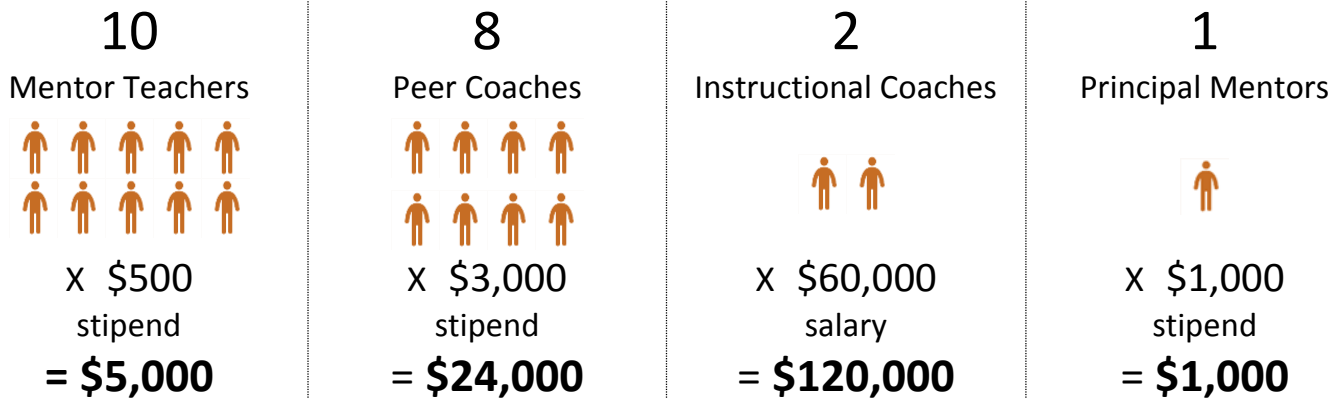
COST & SUSTAINABILITY

Jamestown has used Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) grants to fund the development and implementation of its career ladder pathways. The district is committed to sustaining all grant funded activities, including career ladder pathways, beyond the grant term.

The district budget has substantially increased professional development for 2014-15, with plans in place to sustain this increase in future years. The district is also evaluating vacant positions to determine whether these may be reassigned as full-release teacher leader positions to support and sustain program goals in future years.

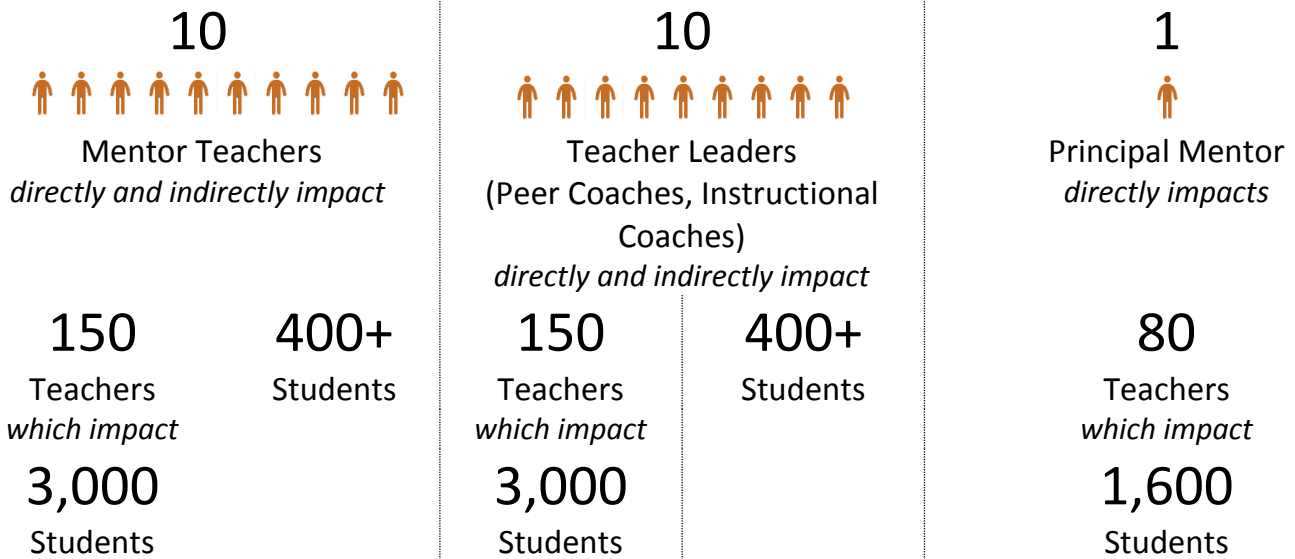




Michela Tehan, Mentor Teacher at Persell Middle School, guides first-year teacher Lauren Scharf during a collaborative planning session. Mentor Teachers meet regularly with Novice Teachers to support and strengthen their instructional practice as they transition to a new career in teaching.









IMPACT

Jamestown, as a Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) 3 grantee, implemented its career ladder pathways at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. The district has set structures and systems in place to monitor and track progress of grant initiatives. Program evaluation is ongoing.



COST SAVINGS	TIME SAVINGS
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded professional development provided by teacher leaders has saved the district approximately \$20,000 for work previously provided by consultants. • Developing the skills and expertise of teacher leaders in each school will support a turnkey training model which will save the district approximately \$40,000 for work currently provided by consultants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of video by mentor teachers for coaching and observations has decreased time spent out of classrooms by approximately 30%. • Use of video and on-demand professional development training sessions has increased time spent in classrooms by 10%.

STUDENT NEEDS ADDRESSED		TEACHER AND LEADER NEEDS ADDRESSED	
	<p>On benchmark assessments of early literacy skills in grades K-2, grade level fluency has increased by 8% from the beginning to middle of the 2014-15 school year.</p>		<p>12 teachers were identified during the 2014-15 school year to receive mentoring from a Professional Mentor Teacher. These teachers were paired with Mentors based on strengths, weakness, grade, and content area.</p>
	<p>On benchmark assessments of reading comprehension in grades 3-6, the percentage of students reading within the College and Career Readiness Lexile range, has increased by 6% from the beginning to middle of the 2014-15 school year.</p>		<p>150 teachers received individual, small group, or large group coaching from the K-8 Instructional Coaches and Peer coaches during fall 2014.</p>
	<p>48% of students met their grade level growth projection from the beginning to middle of the 2014-15 school year on benchmark assessments of mathematics skills in grades 3-8.</p>		<p>During the 2014-15 school year, 12 teachers and 1 principal fulfilled newly developed career ladder pathway roles. Prior to the STLE 3 grant, formal career ladder pathways were not in place within the district.</p>

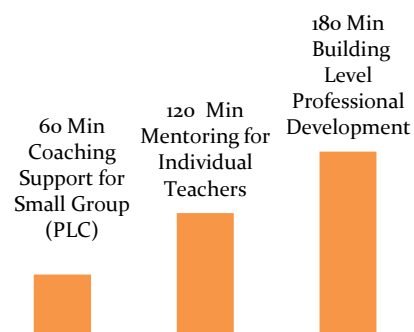
One Day in the Life of Laura Burstrom: Jamestown Instructional Coach



**Laura Burstrom,
Instructional Coach
Jamestown City School District**

One Day in the Life: by the minute

- 8:20 AM Check email and formulate plan for the day.
- 8:45 AM Meet with Kindergarten Professional Learning Community (PLC) to analyze math data in order to form intervention groups.
- 9:45 AM Meet with 2nd grade teacher to discuss students' reading strengths and weaknesses using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and guided reading data as well as discuss how to present this information to parents during conferences.
- 11:00 AM Lunch
- 11:45 AM Observe 1st grade skills lesson and provide teacher with immediate feedback.
- 12:45 PM Meet with building coach at Love Elementary School to plan professional development training on Teachscape Learn.
- 1:45 PM Travel back to the office to align observation evidence from the 1st grade classroom with the Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- 2:30 PM Meet with the other Instructional Coach to create a PowerPoint for the Teachscape Learn professional development workshop.



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 Laura is developing her teaching and leadership skills:

Implementation Planning



Laura participated in the annual summer Leadership Retreat as well as initial and ongoing workshops focused on providing learning-focused feedback, enactment of curriculum aligned to college and career ready standards, and analysis of student learning data to prepare for her leadership role.

One-on-One Support



Throughout the academic year, all teacher leaders confer regularly with the district Coordinators of Teacher Development, English Language Arts, and Mathematics who, in addition to building principals, provide guidance and support to teacher leaders in their work to enhance peer effectiveness.

Communities



Laura participates in monthly meetings and professional development opportunities throughout the year in collaboration with other teacher leaders and administrators to provide support for one another and problem solve.