IU PIIC Mentors work with instructional coaches to focus on increasing student engagement and improving student achievement through the implementation of the PLN framework and other evidence-based literacy strategies.

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General

What is the Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional coaching? The Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Coaching is a statewide effort designed to develop and support the consistent delivery of high quality instructional coaching, ongoing mentoring and sustained professional development for instructional coaches and mentors. It is a system of training and support for instructional coaches, teacher leaders, and the mentors who support them.

Don’t good teachers of adolescents automatically make good teachers/coaches of adults? (i.e., Isn't there a uniform set of skills for good teaching?)
In athletics, not every great athlete automatically becomes a great coach. This same theory applies to education. Not every great teacher automatically becomes a great coach but every great coach must have been a great teacher.

There is a core set of skills and standards that describe instructional coaching. Our hopes are that each school district hires highly qualified coaches to support their school improvement plans and strategic plans.
Does PIIC provide any direct service to students? No, PIIC provides direct services to coaches who provide direct services to teachers. Teachers then provide the direct services to students.

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Funding and Hiring

How will the IU mentors be hired? Some IUs already have a staff member who qualifies for the position. If not, a job posting will be necessary. The hiring practices of the IU are the responsibility of the individual IU.

What funding supports the IU mentor position? The Pennsylvania Department of Education is providing funding for the IU mentor position. Using a generous cap, there will be full funding in the first year of each cohort; 66% in the second year and 33% in the third year. Beginning in year one, PIIC and the executive directors will work together to explore additional funding sources to sustain the IU mentor position. An option for sustainability may be through a fee for service model.

How long will the IU mentor maintain the mentoring position? The IU mentor is hired by the IU; the agreement for employment is between the IU and the mentor. The PA Institute for Instructional Coaching is funded through a seven-year grant from the Annenberg Foundation and a three year commitment from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Can the IU mentor position be a part-time position? Unless there are extenuating circumstances, the position is for a full-time mentor whose sole responsibility is to support instructional coaching and instructional coaches in each of the districts in his/her IU.

Will the IU mentors be reimbursed for travel expenses? The IU mentor will be reimbursed for travel expenses approved by PIIC and the IU executive directors. A cap for other expenses will also be included.

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Roles and Responsibilities

What are the roles and responsibilities of the IU mentor? The mentor will regularly visit assigned school sites. He/she is expected to collaborate with coaches and school leadership team to identify the school's teaching and learning needs by collecting and analyzing appropriate data, developing a plan that articulates problem solving actions and goals, and establishing effective procedures for communicating information about the impact of coaching on student learning to the entire school community. The mentor will provide resources and support for the coaches that reinforce effective instruction via ongoing professional learning opportunities and professional study groups. The mentor will attend mentor meetings and other PIIC professional learning opportunities and maintain confidentiality with instructional coaches and the teachers they support.

What is the role of the IU mentor if there are only 1 or 2 districts in the IU with instructional coaches? Most high schools across the state have Classrooms for the Future coaches. The IU mentor will work with all instructional coaches in high schools across the state. The mentor is also expected to work with districts that anticipate implementing an instructional coaching model.

Who supervises the IU mentors? The IU mentors are supervised by the IU executive directors. Oversight for all mentors and the programs of study will be provided by the PIIC executive director and the executive team.

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Support and Professional Development

IU mentors are learning about the Penn Literacy Network (PLN). What if the districts they serve are already implementing another literacy framework? The Penn Literacy Network embraces instructional techniques and literacy strategies designed to enhance student outcomes, change teacher practices and increase student engagement. It is not meant to supplant any instructional/literacy framework already implemented in districts. PLN offers additional instructional techniques and strategies for a teacher's toolbox.

How will the IU mentor be supported? The IU mentor will be supported by PDE, IU staff members and by PIIC's executive team.

How will the superintendents of each district learn about PIIC and the IU mentoring services? The IU executive directors will communicate regularly with each superintendent in the IU. The curriculum coordinators in each IU will also be instrumental in sharing information about the professional development opportunities for the IU mentors. Mentors are expected to facilitate on-going professional development for the instructional coaches in each district. Our websites, www.pacoaching.org and www.instituteforinstructionalcoaching.org , newsletters and other print materials will be sources of information.

What professional development will the IU mentors receive? IU mentors are expected to participate in all PIIC professional learning opportunities. Planning these opportunities is collaborative with PDE, the IU executive directors, the IU curriculum coordinators, current mentors, current coaches, experts in the field, and other appropriate entities.

How will the IU mentors work with coaches? The IU mentors will work with the participating schools to plan a schedule for visitations with the instructional coaches and for facilitating ongoing professional learning opportunities for the districts in each IU.

What professional development will be offered to the coaches in each IU? There will be a full program of study for the instructional coaches designed during the pilot year which will reflect ongoing assessments for program improvement as suggested by the current mentors and IUs.

Is PIIC only a high school model? PIIC is currently designed to address the needs of instructional coaches and teachers in high schools across the state. Over the next 3-4 years, PIIC will expand its array of professional development and support to include grades K – 12.

How does PIIC support PDE's six circles and the resiliency/wellness approach to student achievement? The PIIC programs of study will enhance PDE's standards aligned system and are designed to help coaches, with the support of the IUs, help teachers improve student academic achievement and increase student engagement across all content areas in all schools.

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School/District Administrators

What services will PIIC provide to help school administrators? PIIC's program of study includes several sessions offering ongoing professional development on the process and content of instructional coaching and instructional mentoring. Please check the website for a list

of items that will be addressed throughout the PIIC professional learning opportunities.

Will our coaches and teachers always have to go to workshops off campus to receive training support? PIIC provides offsite professional development approximately 3 times a year. In addition to the offsite learning opportunities, instructional coaches provide ongoing professional development in their building and at the IU. The IU based mentors will help coaches facilitate ongoing professional development at the school site, district site, or IU site.

Will PIIC lead professional development sessions at the high school based on needs and issues identified by the school? (i.e., Will PIIC work directly with teachers to support professional development?) Instructional coaches from each school should design a needs assessment for their school to identify the needs. The PIIC mentors help the instructional coaches plan and facilitate the professional development at the school site. In addition, coaches provide professional learning around topics shared through our PIIC programs of study around literacy and student engagement.

Will we be able to provide on-site support for technology issues related to CFF (Now 21st Century Teaching and Learning)? PIIC is a literacy based model providing coaches, administrators, and mentors with ongoing professional development opportunities on the content and process of instructional coaching and mentoring. Technology support is a focus of CFF.

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