



## **Christie Administration Announces Additional \$1M Investment in Achievement Coaches Teacher Leadership Program**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Trenton, NJ** – The New Jersey Department of Education has posted two new competitive grant opportunities to expand the state's successful Achievement Coaches initiative for a second year.

Last February, the Department announced the selection of 19 districts to participate in the first year of the Achievement Coaches program, which empowered outstanding educators to provide high quality training and resources to their peers. In July, the coaches participated in a rigorous, week-long summer training to prepare professional development sessions created by and for New Jersey teachers and administrators. Since then, the 2015 Achievement Coaches have trained over 3,500 teachers.

"We are excited to build upon the terrific momentum of this program to date," said Commissioner of Education David C. Hespe. "Our 2015 Achievement Coaches are receiving rave reviews from their peers across the state, and we know they will help us make these training opportunities even more helpful and accessible to other teachers next year."

Participants in the program have already seen its impact on teachers and students. "The Achievement Coach Program challenges teachers to rediscover their passion for learning in ways traditional professional development does not," explained Gabe Tangalo, High School Social Studies Teacher and 2015 Achievement Coach from Bergenfield Public Schools. "The impact on the students of Bergenfield goes beyond quantifiable data; it is seen in the richer, deeper and more enjoyable learning experiences that our teachers now purposefully provide."

Richard Cohen, Assistant Superintendent and 2015 Achievement Coach program manager from Metuchen Public Schools, remarked, "This peer-to-peer coaching approach has had an even greater influence on our staff's professional learning, especially to promote standards and assessments, than other efforts to date. This program recognizes great teachers in a formal way and allows us to put them in a position to feel confident to stand in front of their peers to talk about best practices in their own classrooms."

Of the total 2016 funding amount, \$400,000 will be awarded to teams of educators who participated in the first year of the Achievement Coaches program to continue their work and to train a new group of teachers and administrators. The remaining \$600,000 will be allocated for new districts to select groups of Achievement Coaches who will earn stipends to expand their skills and provide turn-key training to their peers in the summer and fall of 2016.

In the second year of the program, the Department will work with 2015 participants to build on existing content covering teacher practice, standards-aligned assessments, and the use of data to inform instruction. These educators will incorporate new resources and materials – such as PARCC data reports and teacher-created formative assessments – into refined training sessions, and will lead the training of new groups of 2016 Achievement Coaches.

The work performed by the Achievement Coaches is intended to be performed outside of their regular classroom duties. As many as 100 coaches are expected to be hired in the second grant year.

A notice of two grant opportunities (NGO) has been posted and the deadline for districts to apply is December 9. For more information, and to access the grant opportunities, visit the [Achievement Coaches website](#).