
Instructional Coordinators

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Significant Points

- Many instructional coordinators have experience as teachers or education administrators.
- A master's degree is required for positions in public schools and preferred for jobs in other settings.
- Employment is projected to grow much faster than average, reflecting the need to meet new educational standards, train teachers, and develop new materials.
- Favorable job prospects are expected.

Nature of the Work

Instructional coordinators—also known as curriculum specialists, personnel development specialists, instructional coaches, or directors of instructional material—play a large role in improving the quality of education in the classroom. They develop curricula, select textbooks and other materials, train teachers, and assess educational programs for quality and adherence to regulations and standards. They also assist in implementing new technology in the classroom.

At the primary and secondary school level, instructional coordinators often specialize in specific subjects, such as reading, language arts, mathematics, or science. At the postsecondary level, coordinators may work with employers to develop training programs that produce qualified workers.

Instructional coordinators evaluate how well a school or training program's curriculum, or plan of study, meets students' needs. Based on their research and observations of instructional practice, they recommend improvements. They research teaching methods and techniques and develop procedures to ensure that instructors are implementing the curriculum successfully and meeting program goals. To aid in their evaluation, they may meet with members of educational committees and advisory groups to learn about subjects—for example, English, history, or mathematics—and explore how curriculum materials meet students' needs and relate to occupations. Coordinators also may develop questionnaires and interview school staff about the curriculum.

Some instructional coordinators also review textbooks, software, and other educational materials and make recommendations on purchases. They monitor the ways in which teachers use materials in the classroom, and they supervise workers who catalogue, distribute, and maintain a school's educational materials and equipment.

Some instructional coordinators find ways to use technology to enhance student learning. They monitor the introduction of new technology, including the Internet, into a school's curriculum. In addition, instructional coordinators might recommend installing educational software, such as interactive books and exercises designed to enhance student literacy and develop math skills. Instructional coordinators may invite experts—such as computer hardware, software, and library or media specialists—to help integrate technological materials into the curriculum.



Instructional coordinators train teachers on new curriculum standards.

In addition to developing curriculum and instructional materials, many instructional coordinators also plan and provide onsite education for teachers and administrators. Instructional coordinators mentor new teachers and train experienced ones in the latest instructional methods. This role becomes especially important when a school district introduces new content, program innovations, or a different organizational structure. For example, when a State or school district introduces standards or tests that students must pass, instructional coordinators often advise teachers on the content of these standards and provide instruction on how to implement them in the classroom.

Work environment. Many instructional coordinators work long hours. They often work year round. Some spend much of their time traveling between schools meeting with teachers and administrators. The opportunity to shape and improve instructional curricula and work in an academic environment can be satisfying. However, some instructional coordinators find the work stressful because they are continually accountable to school administrators.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

The minimum educational requirement for most instructional coordinator positions in public schools is a master's or higher degree—usually in education—plus a State teacher or administrator license. A master's degree also is preferred for positions in other settings.

Education and training. Instructional coordinators should have training in curriculum development and instruction or in the specific field for which they are responsible, such as mathematics or history. Courses in research design teach how to create and implement research studies to determine the effectiveness of a given method of instruction or curriculum and how to measure and improve student performance.

Instructional coordinators usually are also required to take continuing education courses to keep their skills current. Topics may include teacher evaluation techniques, curriculum training, new teacher induction, consulting and teacher support, and observation and analysis of teaching.

Licensure. Instructional coordinators must be licensed to work in public schools. Some States require a teaching license, whereas others require an education administrator license.

Other qualifications. Instructional coordinators must have a good understanding of how to teach specific groups of students

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-2016	
				Number	Percent
Instructional coordinators	25-9031	129,000	159,000	29,000	22

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

and expertise in developing educational materials. As a result, many people become instructional coordinators after working for several years as teachers. Also beneficial is work experience in an education administrator position, such as a principal or assistant principal, or in another advisory role, such as a master teacher.

Instructional coordinators must be able to make sound decisions about curriculum options and to organize and coordinate work efficiently. They should have strong interpersonal and communication skills. Familiarity with computer technology also is important for instructional coordinators, who are increasingly involved in gathering technical information for students and teachers.

Advancement. Depending on experience and educational attainment, instructional coordinators may advance to higher administrative positions in a school system or to management or executive positions in private industry.

Employment

Instructional coordinators held about 129,000 jobs in 2006. Almost 40 percent worked in public or private elementary and secondary schools, while more than 20 percent worked in public or private junior colleges, colleges and universities, and professional schools. Other employing industries included State and local government; individual and family services; child day care services; scientific research and development services; and management, scientific, and technical consulting services.

Job Outlook

Much faster-than-average job growth is projected. Job opportunities generally should be favorable, particularly for those with experience in math and reading curriculum development.

Employment change. The number of instructional coordinators is expected to grow by 22 percent over the 2006-16 decade, much faster than the average for all occupations, as they will be instrumental in developing new curricula to meet the demands of a changing society and in training teachers. Although budget constraints may limit employment growth to some extent, a continuing emphasis on improving the quality of education

should result in an increasing demand for these workers. The emphasis on accountability also should increase at all levels of government and cause more schools to focus on improving standards of educational quality and student performance. Growing numbers of coordinators will be needed to incorporate the new standards into existing curricula and make sure teachers and administrators are informed of changes.

Additional job growth for instructional coordinators will stem from the increasing emphasis on lifelong learning and on programs for students with special needs, including those for whom English is a second language. These students often require more educational resources and consolidated planning and management within the educational system.

Job prospects. Favorable job prospects are expected. Opportunities should be best for those who specialize in subjects targeted for improvement by the No Child Left Behind Act—namely, reading, math, and science. There also will be a need for more instructional coordinators to show teachers how to use technology in the classroom.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of instructional coordinators in May 2006 were \$52,790. The middle 50 percent earned between \$38,800 and \$70,320. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$29,040, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$87,510.

Related Occupations

Instructional coordinators are professionals involved in education, training, and development. Occupations with similar characteristics include preschool, kindergarten, elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers; postsecondary teachers; education administrators; counselors; and human resources, training, and labor relations managers and specialists.

Sources of Additional Information

Information on requirements and job opportunities for instructional coordinators is available from local school systems and State departments of education.