



2013-14 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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1. What is the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant, and why did NYCDOE apply?

The Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant was awarded to NYCDOE in September 2012 by the U.S. Department of Education to implement and refine a teacher career pathway in select high-need middle schools. The grant provides additional resources over the next four years to pilot new teacher leadership roles that will:

- 1) provide peer support to teachers to build their practice based on feedback and coaching conversations; and
- 2) allow some of our strongest teachers to gain adult leadership experience by sharing expertise among peers.

NYCDOE applied to the grant because we believe that when high-performing teachers are provided opportunities to share best practices with other teachers, the instructional quality of the entire school improves. Since these leadership roles will be implemented in a subset of schools, the TIF grant will also allow NYCDOE to learn about effective combinations of teacher leadership roles within a school.

2. Why is the TIF grant program important to NYCDOE's approach to leadership development?

NYCDOE believes that teachers should have multiple, differentiated opportunities to grow professionally and take on additional responsibilities throughout their careers as classroom teachers. The TIF grant program offers two different teacher leadership roles that value teachers' expertise and allow teachers various opportunities to learn new skills and support other teachers in their schools.

3. What is the purpose of creating new teacher leadership roles within NYCDOE schools?

These new teacher leadership roles are intended to strengthen instructional practice aligned to Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* and the Common Core standards through peer observation, support, and coaching with the goal of improving student achievement and readiness for college and careers. These teacher leadership positions also provide school leaders with additional ways to utilize high-performing teachers within a school community and offer development opportunities for these teacher leaders through taking on different roles and responsibilities. Importantly, these new positions provide a career path for our most effective teachers that encourage them to advance professionally while staying in the classroom.

4. How will schools benefit from becoming TIF grant partner schools?

- This program will bolster the efforts of middle school leaders to develop, support, and retain their most effective teachers, with the goal of supporting the entire school community's efforts to raise student achievement.
- Centrally subsidized compensation will be provided for teachers who accept teacher leadership positions, and additional funds will be made available to allow those teacher leaders release time to work with their peers.
- Schools will gain added instructional capacity through teacher leadership positions to support implementation of the citywide instructional expectations.
- Other teachers in the school will benefit from enhanced peer support to build their practice through feedback and coaching conversations.
- Teachers and principals will have tools to further develop distributive leadership structures in their school communities.

5. What are the new teacher leadership roles funded through TIF?

For the 2013-14 school year, two new teacher leadership roles will be offered:

- **Peer Instructional Coach (PIC)** – A school-based role in which the selected teacher will teach at least two periods per day and spend the remaining periods supporting other teachers to improve instruction and student learning aligned to Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*. This person will work with groups of teachers within his/her school and will utilize formative classroom visits, debriefs, and other professional learning experiences to support a distributive leadership model. *Receives \$12,000 differential in addition to regular salary as well as ongoing targeted professional development.*
- **Demonstration Teacher (DT)** – A school-based role in which the selected teacher will allow his/her classroom to serve as a laboratory/model classroom as a resource for colleagues. This role has a regular teacher's schedule, and responsibilities may include: modeling lessons; reflecting on and debriefing own lessons with colleagues; creating classroom videos to share; and demonstrating other strategies for modeling best practices. *Receives \$6,000 differential in addition to regular salary as well as ongoing targeted professional development.*

6. If our school is chosen to participate for the 2013-14 school year, what will the program consist of?

If chosen to participate, your school will receive:

- the salary differential for two to four (2-4) Peer Instructional Coaches (PICs), depending on the size of your school;
- the salary differential for two to four (2-4) Demonstration Teachers (DTs), depending on the size of your school;
- funds to cover an additional period of release time for each of the PICs to work with other faculty in your building; and
- ongoing TIF-sponsored professional development for school leaders and teacher leaders throughout the year.

7. How will teachers be selected to fill the new teacher leadership roles?

Each new teacher leadership role will have a unique application/selection process:

- **Peer Instructional Coach (PIC)** – A citywide application will be posted in mid-May, and a central committee will screen applicants to create a pool of candidates. Both candidates internal to TIF schools as well as external teachers will be considered by a central committee for the pool. A school-based hiring committee at each TIF school will select from the eligible pool (external candidates may be considered *only if vacancies exist* at the school); final selections will be made by the school principal.
- **Demonstration Teacher (DT)** – A school-based posting will be available in June. Applications will be collected throughout the summer and screened centrally for eligibility. In September, final selection of internal candidate will be made by principals supported by a school-based hiring committee.

8. What qualities are most important for individuals in new teacher leadership roles?

- **Peer Instructional Coach (PIC)** – Ability to create and nurture a professional learning community and to work cooperatively and effectively with colleagues; experience developing and facilitating professional development for adult learners; successful impact on student achievement and knowledge of Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* and the Common Core Learning Standards; previous record of outstanding classroom teaching ability in a high-need environment.
- **Demonstration Teacher (DT)** – Comfort and confidence to open classroom at designated times to allow for colleagues to visit, view practice, and engage in conversations about classroom practice; willingness to videotape lessons for possible dissemination to broader citywide audience; successful impact on student achievement and knowledge of Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* and the Common Core Learning Standards; previous record of outstanding classroom teaching ability in a high-need environment.

9. What professional development supports will be available for teachers and schools in the TIF program?

Teachers in these roles will take part in approximately 4-6 hours of professional development (PD) per month outside of the school day (they will receive additional per session for these hours). The PD will focus on helping teachers improve their practice aligned to the citywide instructional expectations, including implementation of the Danielson *Framework* and Common Core-aligned curriculum, as well as on facilitative leadership skills. Principals of TIF schools will be invited to participate in PD approximately once per month (they will also receive per session) on the use of distributive leadership and how to most effectively utilize the teacher leadership roles to support implementation of the citywide instructional expectations. We anticipate holding a three-day intensive summer kick-off and orientation event in August to prepare teacher leaders and school leaders for this work. Participating school leaders and teacher leaders will learn about the goals of the program and receive targeted and role-specific PD. TIF program schools will receive additional support from a Teacher Effectiveness Ambassador who will work closely with the individuals in these new teacher leadership roles throughout the school year. More details about professional development supports will be provided before schools are accepted into the program.

10. How will teachers be compensated for taking on additional responsibilities?

1. **Peer Instructional Coach (PIC)** – School will continue to fund the salary. Grant will cover \$12,000 salary differential, 20% release time, and fringe for release time. Salary differential is only applicable for duration of role and is pensionable. Per session after-school professional development opportunities will take place throughout the school year. The teacher receives full \$12,000 salary differential at the end of the 2013-14 school year.
- **Demonstration Teacher (DT)** – School will continue to fund the salary. Grant will cover \$6,000 salary differential. Salary differential is only applicable for duration of role and is pensionable. Per session after-school professional development opportunities will be take place throughout the school year. The teacher receives full \$6,000 salary differential at the end of the 2013-14 school year.

11. How does the TIF grant connect to the citywide teacher effectiveness work that our school has completed thus far?

TIF funds will enable school leaders to establish teacher leadership roles to support the implementation of the anticipated new teacher evaluation system during the 2013-14 school year. These teacher leadership roles will enhance instructional capacity within the school and offer additional supports for all teachers to grow professionally. In addition, we anticipate that those teachers who take on the TIF teacher leadership roles outlined above will be required to receive Effective or Highly Effective ratings at the end of the year (as determined by the anticipated new teacher evaluation system) in order to continue in their roles.

12. What if I have already applied or plan to apply to the cluster-based Teacher Leadership Program (TLP)?

If you have already applied to TLP or plan to apply, you can also apply to TIF. Please note that if your school chooses to apply to both programs, the teacher leaders from your school who participate in TLP should be the same group of teachers who apply to and are selected to take on the new TIF teacher leadership roles. We will work with applicable schools that implement the programs jointly, for example ensuring that professional development for the two programs is coordinated.

13. What if I am currently part of the Middle School Quality Initiative (MSQI) or plan to apply for the new cohort?

If you are currently an MSQI school or eligible for the new cohort, we strongly encourage you to apply to TIF. The teams leading both of these initiatives centrally plan to work with schools in both programs to structure the relevant resources in a way that benefits the schools. Schools requesting to participate in MSQI for the first time this year and considering applying to both programs might decide to use the TIF teacher leadership roles in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade literacy (ELA, science, and/or social studies) to supplement the work of MSQI. Current MSQI schools could focus on literacy at any grade level. Another option would be to use the TIF roles for math in order to provide resources to that set of teachers and area of work, since MSQI's primary focus is literacy.

14. What is the difference between a Peer Instructional Coach and a Lead Teacher?

The Peer Instructional Coach and Lead Teacher roles are similar in that they are both positions in which the teacher leader remains in the classroom for part of the day and serves as a peer coach during the other part of their day. They are also similar in that only those teachers who have applied through a citywide posting and have been accepted into a central candidate pool are eligible to be hired by a participating school.

There are differences in terms of salary differential, release time, funding, and professional development focus:

1. **Salary differential:** Lead Teachers receive a salary differential of \$10,700; Peer Instructional Coaches receive a salary differential of \$12,000.
2. **Release time:** Lead Teachers serve as a peer coach for half of the day (.4 release time). Peer Instructional Coaches serve as a peer coach for at least one period of the day (.2 release time).
3. **Funding:** The Lead Teacher position has been in the UFT teacher's contract since 2007; principals self-fund the teacher's salary and differential of their Lead Teacher(s). The Peer Instructional Coach role will be subsidized by the TIF grant, which will cover the salary differential and one additional period of release time only; principals will still be responsible for self-funding the teacher's salary.
4. **Professional development focus:** Lead Teachers currently receive monthly PD focused on coaching and the citywide instructional expectations, in partnership with the UFT Teacher Center. Peer Instructional Coaches will also receive monthly PD that will focus on the citywide instructional expectations, but with particular emphasis on supporting teachers with the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system.

If you have Lead Teachers at your school, we encourage them to apply for the Peer Instructional Coach and Demonstration Teacher roles if they are interested. Lead Teachers who apply for the Peer Instructional Coach role may go through a modified application and selection process. Schools may maintain Lead Teacher positions at their school while they participate in the TIF program.

15. Who is involved in this grant, how long does it last, and how can we receive more information?

The Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) is a five-year grant that was awarded to NYCDOE by the U.S. Department of Education and is being administered by the DOE's Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality. The current application is for participation during this next school year (2013-14); however, we expect schools will participate for more than one year. TIF is a collaborative effort between NYCDOE and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). We will be hosting a webinar and jointly hosting local borough town hall meetings during the week of May 13th to provide additional information to interested schools. Schools that express interest will receive an email with details on how to join these events next week. For more information please contact the TIF Program Director, Jeremy Walter, at (718) 935-3723 or jwalter2@schools.nyc.gov.