



Day in the Life of an Academic Coach

Andrea Lewis is a founding Academic Coach at Artesian Community School. She and two of her colleagues found out about Artesian's full-time tutoring corps when applying to the Memphis Teacher Residency (MTR) last year. They were not accepted into the program because they needed more in-school experience, and the MTR recommended Artesian as a way to get this experience. Other Academic Coaches in this founding group include a handful of recent college graduates who wanted to take a year off and serve in their city before going to graduate school and retired school teachers—two of whom live in the community and used to teach at this school 20 years ago.

Andrea has learned a lot about the demands on teachers at a high-performing charter school. The 12 founding Academic Coaches are managed by Mr. Williams, Artesian's Head Academic Coach. Because Mr. Williams was the education program director for a community-based after-school ministry for the past 2 years, he also provides leadership for his team and school-wide PD on developmental needs of Artesian's middle school students.

Before school started, Mr. Williams and the ADAA led 2 weeks of intense training and professional development for the tutors, ensuring that they would be prepared and equipped to work with small groups of students effectively. They learned and practiced effective teaching techniques, realizing the urgency of catching Artesian's students up in basic skills and the necessity to make the most of every minute during tutoring. Before the two weeks were up, each Academic Coach realized how important this daily one-on-two tutoring would be for Artesian's sixth grade students, and the team made a commitment that they would not let one student fall behind.

Three times a week she and five other Academic Coaches meet with their Teaching Team of four content teachers and one special education teacher for 35 minutes to discuss the progress of that Team's dedicated 80 students. Andrea is responsible for growing 14 of these students in math during seven 40-minute tutoring blocks each day. During the common planning meetings, the teachers, and sometimes Artesian's ADAA, talk about strategies for how the Academic Coaches can provide the best individualized support for their students. Andrea feels like she is a big reason for her students' success and growth in math this year, and it is a great feeling.

On a typical day, each Academic Coach leads seven tutoring sessions with two students at a time. S/he focuses on math skills-building during most coaching sessions, and occasionally an Academic Coach will be assigned a pair of students who come to tutoring for accelerated math practice. Each Academic Coach has different school responsibilities, such as collecting homework in the mornings, manning the hallways in the mornings or afternoons, lunch duty, and teaching Advisory classes. In addition to these duties, the Coaches get at least 70 minutes of personal planning time each day. Three days a week, the Academic Coaches have an additional 35 minutes that is shared with their respective Teaching Teams and Character Coaches, allowing the full-complement of a cohort's Support Team to meet for 105 minutes each week about their students. Lastly, on

Wednesdays, Academic Coaches stay for 58 minutes of professional development, which is either tutors-only and led by the Head Academic Coach, or whole-staff, in which they join in the rest of the faculty.