



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Teacher Fellow
Program Category: Organizational Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Monica Smith-Callahan
Title: Deputy County Manager for Community Affairs
Signature: *M. Smith-Callahan*

Program Overview

The Henrico Teacher Fellow program, a pioneering part of Henrico County Public Schools' Career Ladder initiative, is designed to foster academic excellence and professional development in schools. This innovative program strategically positions highly effective classroom teachers in dual roles — as educators and mentors. Teacher Fellows dedicate a portion of their day to classroom teaching and the remainder to guiding and supporting first-year and provisionally licensed teachers. Their pivotal role includes assisting in lesson design, delivery and assessment, enhancing student engagement through robust tier one instruction and co-teaching. A unique feature of this program is the transformation of Teacher Fellows' classrooms into dynamic learning labs where new educators can observe and learn from implemented research-based instructional strategies.

Additionally, Teacher Fellows play a crucial role in supporting professional learning communities and professional development activities at their assigned schools. Operating on an 11-month basis and an extended teaching contract, this program offers teacher leaders an opportunity to advance their careers and provide professional growth while maintaining a direct connection with students. The dual objectives of this first-time program are to provide a novel pathway for teacher leadership within HCPS and enrich professional learning for educators, emphasizing support for those newly entering the teaching profession.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

The Teacher Fellow program was created in response to research conducted by our division and to Henrico's strategic goal to recruit, retain and reward educators. Qualitative data was collected through eight different focus group sessions of veteran and highly effective teachers and quantitative data was drawn from annual school staffing reports and student performance indicators. From the focus groups, the division learned that many veteran teachers were seeking

new professional responsibilities that enabled them to mentor new educators while still having time to work directly with students. A quantitative analysis identified a cluster of schools that shared high teacher attrition rates and lower student achievement outcomes, indicating a need for the presence of a veteran teacher to help new and provisionally licensed educators navigate the profession.

For initial implementation in the 2023-24 school year, any HCPS school with a combined vacancy and provisional rate of 25% was designated as an “Opportunity School,” resulting in nine schools chosen for this program. As part of the Opportunity School initiative, each school received a new Teacher Fellow to help mentor and support new educators to reduce this vacancy and provisional rate (11% higher than the median rate in the rest of the division).

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The Henrico Teacher Fellow program stands out as an innovative and impactful new position for teacher leadership, meriting recognition. This pioneering program addresses a critical gap in teacher professional development and sets a new educational mentorship and leadership standard that can be a model to other school systems. In response to teacher feedback, Henrico created a career path for teachers that enables them to remain in the classroom with students for a portion of the instructional day while also strengthening the practices of new and aspiring teachers. The program has created a ripple effect of excellence and support throughout Henrico County Public Schools by empowering experienced teachers to serve as mentors and role models while remaining in the classroom part-time to work directly with students.,. This program combines the best aspects of the traditional job of the classroom teacher and an instructional coach while bringing great educators into areas with the greatest need.

HCPS believes that this dual approach to job retention of excellent teachers can benefit our community and those like us for future generations.

How Program Was Carried Out

The Teacher Fellows program serves two primary needs:

- Schools designated as Opportunity Schools demonstrated a need for a veteran teacher presence to model, support and mentor strong teaching practices for schools with intense staffing needs.
- The Teacher Fellow position provides an opportunity to retain highly effective teachers through job differentiation. The position gives a new professional challenge and autonomy to veteran teachers. It allows them to seek a leadership position while still spending a portion of their day working directly with students, thus providing an attractive and desirable new job for aspiring teacher leaders.

This program was approved in February 2023 by the Henrico County School Board. Interviews for nine Teacher Fellow positions were conducted between March and April 2023. More than 100 educators applied for the nine positions, with applicants from within and outside the division, indicating a clear interest in the new position. Teacher Fellows were hired in May 2023 and began an intensive three-week orientation process led by the HCPS Department of Professional Learning and Leadership to help them gain skills needed to mentor, coach and support new teachers and increase their skills as classroom educators.

The primary benefits of the program are:

- New and provisionally licensed teachers and their students in the nine Opportunity Schools who receive direct support and mentorship from the Teacher Fellows.
- Students in Opportunity Schools are taught by newly hired expert educators serving as Teacher Fellows.

- Educators in our division now see the Teacher Fellow position as a career path within our division.

The school division plays a pivotal role in this program, overseeing its implementation, providing necessary resources and facilitating collaboration between Teacher Fellows and other educators. Teacher Fellows' first priority within their assigned schools is to the students they are assigned to teach. As opposed to a traditional classroom educator, who spends 80-90% of their day directly teaching students, a Teacher Fellow spends between 15-20%. This allows them time to plan for and model engaging and student-centered lessons, which is even more critical in Opportunity Schools that were selected because of low student outcomes and high teacher turnover. In a secondary school, for example, a Teacher Fellow teaches one class for 90 minutes during a day, as opposed to three classes. With their remaining time, Teacher Fellows engage in support for new and provisionally licensed teachers by co-teaching in their classrooms, scheduling mentoring and coaching meetings, leading teacher planning teams and conducting classroom observations. This combines the traditional teaching role with teacher leadership and support.

Beyond their assigned schools, Teacher Fellows are an asset to our entire school division. They facilitate classroom observations for new teachers across the division, showcasing instructional strategies and practices and travel to work with educators at other schools. They also lead division-level professional learning programs such as microcredentials courses and share their expertise in various ways, like sharing recorded videos of teaching strategies with other schools. The HCPS Professional Learning and Leadership team oversees the Teacher Fellows, managing their evaluation, placement and training. School administrators collaborate closely in decision-making regarding the Teacher Fellows' roles and contributions within their respective schools.

As part of this program, the Department of Professional Learning and Leadership provides thorough and targeted weekly professional learning for all Teacher Fellows. In 2023-24, the core objectives of this professional learning have been:

- Mentoring and coaching support.
- Mastery of instructional design, delivery and assessment.
- Productivity and efficiency within the newly created role.
- Cohesion and collaboration among the new team of nine Teacher Fellows.

These collaborative learning experiences have been pivotal in transforming a group of accomplished classroom educators into a cohesive team of instructional experts capable of successfully mentoring and supporting the retention of new teachers in schools with a great need for effective and impactful career educators.

PROGRAM COST:

The primary cost incurred by the division with this program is the cost of nine additional staff members. While each of the nine Teacher Fellows varied slightly in terms of salary (based on years and placement on the Henrico Career Ladder through advanced degrees and certifications), using a rough median salary, each Teacher Fellow cost the division approximately \$60,000 a year. In adding nine Fellows, the total annual cost stands at around \$540,000 yearly.

For perspective, the National Education Association has estimated that schools incur an average cost of \$20,000 each time a teacher leaves a division. These costs include time spent in the hiring process and the cost associated with the onboarding and training new teachers. These costs may also include expenses related to substitute teachers and time other staff spend away from their specific roles within a school or division. Therefore, every three staff members that Teacher Fellows help retain in the teaching profession offsets their entire compensation. If the Teacher Fellow program meets its objectives for the year and helps at least three educators remain working in their assigned schools, the Teacher Fellow position would have a net zero cost to the school division.

Program Results

As of February 2024, the effectiveness of the Teacher Fellow program has been evaluated by four data points:

- Logs of interactions between Teacher Fellows and the faculty they support.
- Test score data of students directly taught by the Teacher Fellows.
- Focus groups of opportunity school principals.
- Two surveys of all nine Teacher Fellows.

Teacher Fellows complete daily support logs, tracking the frequency and nature of interactions with other educators in their assigned school. On average, Teacher Fellows have provided more than 500 hours of extra support to teachers in Opportunity Schools each month. More than 70% of this time has been spent with new and provisionally licensed teachers, clearly aligning to the established goal and intention of this program. The type of support varies from school to school, but in all cases, the top types of support offered are co-teaching, modeling and mentoring conversations — again aligning directly with the established purpose of this program and research-based practices that contribute to teacher retention.

In all nine cases, students directly taught by the Teacher Fellows have shown higher median student test scores on benchmark assessments than students in other classes within the Opportunity Schools, demonstrating the clear value added to the school by including a Teacher Fellow on their faculty.

As part of the Opportunity School Initiative, principals of the nine schools meet weekly with Henrico divisional leaders. On three occasions, structured focus groups have been conducted during these meetings regarding the Teacher Fellow Program. The nine principals strongly agreed with the statement that, “The addition of a Teacher Fellow has made a positive impact on my faculty and students.”

Teacher Fellows completed a mid-year survey in November 2023. All nine strongly agreed with the statements that:

- “I feel proud to be called a Teacher Fellow.”
- “I have a positive impact on my school in year one as a Teacher Fellow.”
- “I think the Teacher Fellow position will positively impact teacher retention in Henrico Schools.”

These serve as a triangulated data point indicating that the position meets the program’s needs and goals.

Brief Summary

The Teacher Fellow program was created in response to research conducted by our division and to Henrico’s strategic goal to recruit, retain and reward educators. Qualitative data was collected through eight different focus group sessions of veteran and highly effective teachers and quantitative data was drawn from annual school staffing reports and student performance indicators. From the focus groups, the division learned that many veteran teachers were seeking new professional responsibilities that enabled them to mentor new educators while still having time to work directly with students. A quantitative analysis identified a cluster of schools that shared high teacher attrition rates and lower student achievement outcomes, indicating a need for the presence of a veteran teacher to help new and provisionally licensed educators navigate the profession.

HCPS created the Henrico Teacher Fellow program, a pioneering part of the division’s Career Ladder initiative. The program is designed to foster academic excellence and professional development in schools. This innovative program strategically positions highly effective classroom teachers in dual roles — as educators and mentors. Teacher Fellows dedicate a portion of their day to classroom teaching and the remainder to guiding and supporting first-year and provisionally

licensed teachers. Their pivotal role includes assisting in lesson design, delivery and assessment, enhancing student engagement through robust tier one instruction and co-teaching. A unique feature of this program is the transformation of Teacher Fellows' classrooms into dynamic learning labs where new educators can observe and learn from implemented research-based instructional strategies.

Additionally, Teacher Fellows play a crucial role in supporting professional learning communities and professional development activities at their assigned schools.

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Teacher Fellow Supplemental Material

Sample Day in the Life of a Secondary Teacher Fellow - Day 1 - Varina HS		
Early Bird	8:00-8:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading a cross-departmental Impact Team of 9 teachers- focusing on improving student engagement using the ABC Model of Engagement
Period 1	9:00-10:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Direct Instruction in Algebra I Collab Class- 24 students- focus on demonstration of CHAMPS behavioral expectations and positive reinforcement of classroom rules and norms. Hosting two provisionally licensed teachers, one from Varina HS, one from Elko MS who are observing CHAMPS strategies in use during the lesson
Period 3	10:35 am-12:05pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading Algebra I Team in co-planning using Meetingwise Agenda format and Impact Team Evidence-Analysis-Action protocol
Period 5	12:10 - 2:20pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Lunch- Follow up conference for Varina HS provisionally licensed teacher who observed Period 1- providing just-in-time CHAMPS training to the teacher during the reflection on the in-class visit B + C Lunch- Lunch Break and grading Algebra 1 assignments from Period 1
Period 7	2:25 - 3:55pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walkthrough observations of 4 new teachers at Varina HS- providing feedback specifically on SEL community building activities
After School	3:55 - 4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up meeting with new teachers- sharing observations from Period 7 walkthroughs and providing training on CASEL Standards based on data

Sample Day in the Life of an Elementary Teacher Fellow - 4th Grade Language Arts Focus		
Fourth Grade Daily Schedule		Sample Teacher Fellow Schedule
Arrival/Morning Work	7:50 - 8:10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-classroom check-in with 4th grade students they support in Language Arts
Morning Meeting/Announcements	8:10 - 8:20am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-teach morning meeting with provisionally licensed teacher modeling CASEL SEL standards
Language Arts Block (Whole Group)	8:25 - 9:25am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modeling a whole group lesson for a new/ provisionally licensed teacher focusing on CHAMPS classroom management techniques
Language Arts Block (Small Group)	9:30 - 10:25am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direct instruction in small groups for students who require reading intervention Hosting two new teachers, one from Fair Oaks ES and one from Highland Springs ES who are observing CHAMPS strategies during small group

LAMP	10:30 - 11:10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Facilitator of 4th Grade Planning Team
Lunch	11:15 - 11:45 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty Free Lunch
Science/Social Studies	11:50 am - 12:50 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk through observations of provisionally licensed/new teachers
Recess	12:55 - 1:25 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference with provisionally licensed teacher who observed a lesson with CHAMPS
Math	1:30 - 2:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Planning for future Language Arts lessons with assigned students
Afternoon Meeting/Pack Up/Begin Dismissal	2:30 pm - 2:40 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in with their 4th grade Language Arts students
Dismissal	2:40 - 3:05 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-up for after-school Impact Team meeting
After School Meeting	3:05 - 3:45 pm	Facilitate Impact Team meeting with cross grade level team, focusing on student engagement strategies