Advanced Teaching Roles (ATR)

08/28/2026 2:34 pm EDT

The Advanced Teaching Roles Program offers school districts an annual opportunity to apply for grants to design and implement new organizational and compensation models that extend the reach of highly effective teachers to more students and/or teams of teachers. The most recent legislation authorizing the program is Session Law 2026-41 (https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2025-2026/SL2026-41.html), and this legislation made changes in the definitions of teacher positions previously used.

This process only applies to those districts that have been approved to participate in the ATR program. More information about the Advanced Teaching Roles Program and participating districts can be found at Advanced Teaching Roles | NC DPI (https://www.dpi.nc.gov/educators/recruitment-support/advanced-teaching-roles).

Recent legislation (Session Law 2026-41 (https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2025-2026/SL2026-41.html)) replaces the previous Adult Leadership Teacher definition with two new definitions:

1. **Collaborative Impact Leader** - An ATR team lead who meets all of the following criteria:
    - Leads a team of between four and eight teachers.
    - Does not serve as the teacher of record for any students.
    - Provides instruction, including co-teaching, for at least thirty percent (30%) of the instructional day to students taught by teachers on the ATR team lead's team.
    - Is not a school administrator.
2. **Partial-Release Collaborative Impact Leader** - An ATR team lead who meets the following criteria:
    - Serves as the teacher of record for at least one class of students.
    - Leads a team of two or three teachers.
    - Is not a school administrator.

The same legislation (Session Law 2026-41 (https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2025-2026/SL2026-41.html)) replaces the Classroom Excellence definition with:

- **Teacher of distinction** - A classroom teacher serving in an advanced teaching role who is
    - the teacher of record for at least twenty percent (20%) more students than the average number of students taught by other teachers on the teacher's ATR team.

Other definitions also defined by Session Law 2026-41 (https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2025-2026/SL2026-41.html):

- **Teacher of record** - The classroom teacher who is responsible for a student's performance. The term does not

include a classroom teacher who is only responsible for a student's performance by virtue of being an ATR team lead.

- **ATR Team Lead** - A teaching assignment that includes leading one or more teachers and being responsible, in addition to the teacher of record, for the performance of all students taught by teachers on that lead teacher's team.

For reference, the previous roles and definitions for staff are listed below. These roles are still used in NCSIS, and the article will clarify which should be used for the new roles defined by Session Law 2026-41 (https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2025-2026/SL2026-41.html). For the 2026–27 school year only, teachers may also still be employed in an Adult Leadership position, as defined by Session Law 2024-57, if they agreed to serve in that role before June 30, 2026.

- **Adult Leadership Teacher** - a teacher who meets the following criteria:
  - Works in the classroom providing instruction for at least 30% of the instructional day.
  - Leads a team of between three and eight teachers.
  - Shares responsibility for the performance of the students of all teachers on the team.
  - Is not a school administrator.
- **Classroom Excellence** - a teacher who meets the following criteria:
  - Is a teacher in an Advanced Teaching Role.
  - Assumes and maintains responsibility for at least 20% of additional students as compared to the most recent prior school year in which the teacher did not receive a salary supplement.

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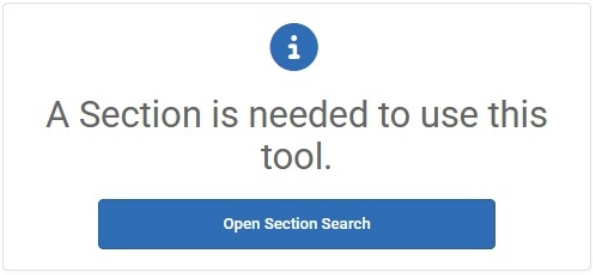
Collaborative Impact Leader and Partial-Release Collaborative Impact Leader

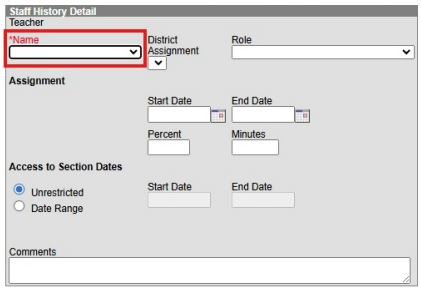
When a teacher serves in an Adult Leadership role (for eligible teachers during the 2026-27 school year only), a Collaborative Impact Leader role, or a Partial-Release Collaborative Impact Leader role, first identify any sections for which they are the teacher of record (if any). Next, identify the sections the teacher supports. These may include all sections taught by the teachers on their team, or only sections in specific subject areas. Once identified, add the teacher to Section Staff History for each section using the following steps.

Select a Section: If a section is not selected, click Open Section Search tool to search by the course name or number. Select the + symbol to the right of the number of sections to view existing sections. Click on an individual section listing in order to select that section. If a section was already selected, the Section Staff History tool will open automatically.

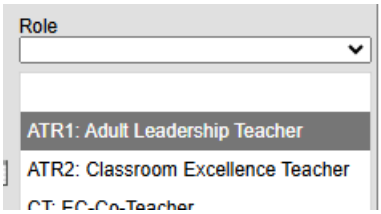


1. Add the Collaborative Impact Leader as a Primary Teacher if they are the teacher of record (partial-release), or as a New Teacher if they are supporting the section. Click on the plus beside **New Primary Teacher** or **New Teacher**, as appropriate.

2. Select the **Name** of the Collaborative Impact Leader from the dropdown.



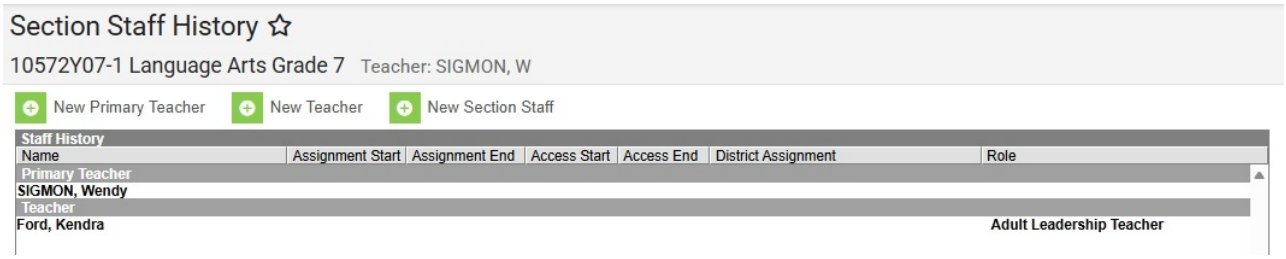
3. Select the **Role** of **ATR1: Adult Leadership Teacher** from the dropdown list. In the future, this label will be adjusted to match the new definitions.



4. If a teacher is assigned to a section for all scheduled days of the section, no **Start Date** or **End Date** is needed. If a teacher starts teaching or support after the section has already started, a **Start Date** should be entered. If a teacher stops teaching or support prior to the section ending, an **End Date** should be entered.
5. Follow local procedures for all other fields on the **Staff History Detail** tool**.**
6. Click **Save** to add the teacher
7. Repeat for each section that a teacher teaches or supports.

After saving, the teacher will appear in the section's **Section Staff History** under **Primary Teacher** or under **Teacher**, as appropriate, with the role of **Adult Leadership Teacher**.

Example:

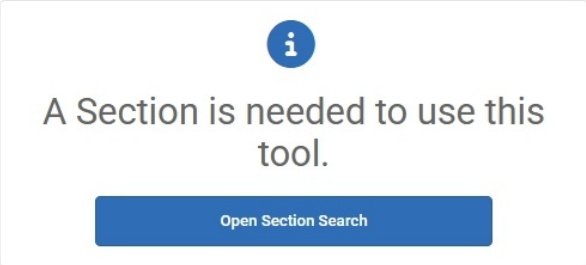


Teacher of Distinction

When a teacher should be tracked with a Teacher of Distinction Role, enter them in Section Staff History for each

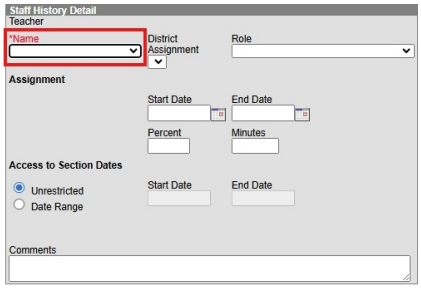
section they teach using the following steps.

Select a Section: If a section is not selected, click Open Section Search tool to search by the course name or number. Select the + symbol to the right of the number of sections to view existing sections. Click on an individual section listing in order to select that section. If a section was already selected, the Section Staff History tool will open automatically.

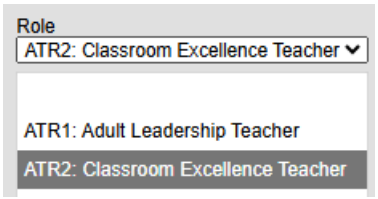


1. The Teacher of Distinction will be added as a New Primary Teacher. Click on the plus beside **New Primary Teacher.**

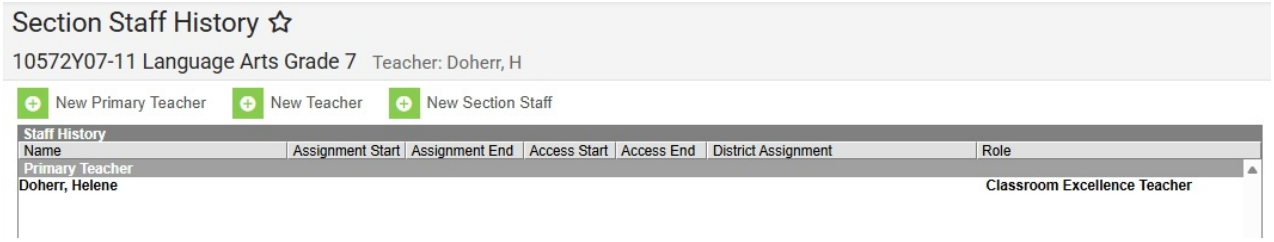
2. Select the **Name** of the Teacher of Distinction from the dropdown.



3. Select the **Role** of **ATR2: Classroom Excellence Teacher** from the dropdown list. In the future, this label will be adjusted to match the new definition.



4. If a teacher is assigned to a section for all scheduled days of the section, no **Start Date** or **End Date** is needed. If a teacher starts teaching after the section has already started, a **Start Date** should be entered. If a teacher stops teaching the class prior to the section ending, an **End Date** should be entered.
5. Follow local procedures for all other fields on the **Staff History Detail** tool.
6. Click **Save** to add the teacher

7. Repeat for each section as appropriate.

After saving, the teacher will appear in the section's **Section Staff History** under **Primary Teacher** with the role of **Classroom Excellence Teacher**.