

APS APPROACH TO INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

Spring 2008

To promote consistency in implementing the APS Approach to Instructional Coaching, the expectation for all parties is to support the purposes, essential elements and roles set forth in this document, while understanding the need for flexibility and professional judgment based on school needs and available resources.

I. Purposes of Coaching

- A. Contribute to increased student achievement and student engagement
- B. Support teachers to set measurable goals for student achievement
- C. Meet the instructional needs of individual students
 - 1) at classroom level
 - 2) for specific at-risk groups
 - 3) to address gaps in student achievement
- D. Expand and refine professional knowledge and instructional expertise of teachers
- E. Increase specific content knowledge
- F. Build instructional and leadership capacity within schools

II. Essential Elements of Coaching

- A. Coaching provides job-embedded professional learning.
- B. Teacher and principal collaborate to develop an individual professional learning plan.
- C. Expectations for coaching should be about expanding and refining professional practice.
- D. There is a clear separation between the evaluation process and coaching.
- E. All participants maintain confidentiality at all times.
- F. Coaching may be provided by teacher leaders, district coaches, and other district consultants (*e.g.*, instructional technology, special education, ELA).
- G. Coaching sessions occur when a teacher or a group of teachers work with a district coach/teacher leader/district consultant and can occur in the following formats:
 - 1) one-on-one to focus on individual teacher goals and provide support based on experience and prior knowledge of teacher
 - 2) in groups of two or more to provide opportunity to work with other teachers as well as with specialized areas such as ELA and special education
 - 3) in a collaborative coaching approach, including inquiry, lab site, follow-up and one-on-one coaching (Data teams may be used as a vehicle to launch inquiry)
 - 4) in laboratory classroom residency formats with district coaches and/or teacher leaders
- H. Each teacher meets with the principal annually to mutually develop individual professional learning plan, which may include coaching.

- I. Coaching participants evaluate and use data to identify next steps for individual professional learning to increase student achievement to meet the goals of the school improvement plan.
- J. All beginning teachers and teachers new to district will receive coaching as part of their professional learning plan.
- K. Individual learning plans may be reviewed quarterly and revised based on student achievement data.
- L. Coaching occurs in one content area at a time unless teacher requests additional coaching.
- M. Teacher, teacher leader and district coach mutually develop coaching schedules that allow time for application and reflection with a minimum of coaching contact twice a month.
- N. Teacher leaders teach half time in their area of content expertise and are released half time to coach.

III. Roles

- A. Classroom Teachers –
 - 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
 - 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with administrators, teacher leaders, district coaches and colleagues
 - 3) Evaluate and use data to identify next steps for individual professional learning to increase student achievement to meet the goals of the school improvement plan
 - 4) Work collaboratively with administrator to develop an individual professional learning plan
 - 5) Share goals of individual professional learning plan with teacher leader/district coach
 - 6) Generate questions to focus coaching support based on data and professional learning plan goals
 - 7) Engage in reflective practices to continuously refine professional practice in meeting student needs
 - 8) Implement new learning in a timely manner to meet the goals of the professional learning plan and to accelerate student achievement
- B. Building Administrators –
 - 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
 - 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with teachers, teacher leaders, district coaches, directors of student achievement
 - 3) Work collaboratively with teacher to develop an individual professional learning plan
 - 4) Provide ongoing communication to staff of school improvement plan and its direct correlation to coaching

- 5) Work collaboratively with teacher leaders/district coaches in classrooms to deepen understanding of professional learning needs while maintaining separation of evaluation and coaching
- 6) Facilitate interaction of teacher leaders/district coaches and classroom teachers (e.g., who is being coached, how often, flexibility, conflict resolution)
- 7) Include district coaches in leadership meetings on regular basis
- 8) Support teacher leaders/district coaches to differentiate professional learning
- 9) Collaborate with directors of student achievement on evaluation of district coaches
- 10) Coordinate professional learning based on school improvement plan goals

C. District Coaches –

- 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
- 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with teachers, teacher leaders, administrators and colleagues
- 3) Expand and refine instructional leadership and coaching practices, including adult learning theory, to support other teachers
- 4) Support development of teacher leaders in literacy and math and support existing teacher leaders in developing coaching skills
- 5) Support development of demonstration classrooms
- 6) Work with teacher teams to deepen understandings of effective literacy and math instruction, including providing demonstrations, modeling teaching strategies, arranging classroom visitations, leading instructional dialogue, supporting professional learning, etc.
- 7) Work with teacher teams to examine student work and instructional strategies
- 8) Deepen understandings of literacy and math instruction among building administration and leadership team
- 9) Work collaboratively with classroom teachers, building administration and leadership team in data gathering and analysis
- 10) Support the building administration and leadership team to develop and implement the building professional learning plan
- 11) Support the building administration and leadership team to develop school improvement plans and its correlation to coaching

D. Teacher Leaders –

- 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
- 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with teachers, district coaches, administrators and colleagues
- 3) Clarify connection of teachers’ instructional goals to school improvement plan
- 4) Teach half time in their area of content expertise and are released half time to coach
- 5) Expand and refine literacy and math understandings evident in own practice

- 6) Expand and refine instructional leadership and coaching practices, including adult learning theory, to support other teachers
- 7) Support teachers in refining effective strategies for assessment, evaluation, planning, teaching and learning
- 8) Support data review and analysis for the purpose of increasing student achievement
- 9) Differentiate support based on student data and achievement gaps
- 10) Work with teacher teams to deepen understandings of effective literacy and math instruction, including providing demonstrations, modeling teaching strategies, arranging classroom visitations, leading instructional dialogue, supporting professional learning, etc.
- 11) Participate on the leadership team
- 12) Facilitate building professional learning

E. Instructional Coordinators –

- 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
- 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with administrators, teacher leaders, district coaches, directors of student achievement and colleagues
- 3) Provide professional learning for district coaches and teacher leaders
- 4) Provide professional learning as identified by district coaches (e.g., district classes, in-services)
- 5) Collaborate with building leadership regarding professional learning, curriculum implementation, and development of school improvement plan and the correlation to coaching
- 6) Facilitate problem solving and conflict resolution involving the coaching process in order to maintain separation between evaluation and coaching

F. Directors of Student Achievement –

- 1) Ensure “Essential Elements of Coaching” are central to all coaching interactions
- 2) Develop positive and supportive relationships with administrators, teachers, teacher leaders, and district coaches
- 3) Support principals to consistently communicate to school staff the district goals, the school improvement plan and the correlation to coaching
- 4) Evaluate district coaches in collaboration with instructional coordinators and building principals

IV. Scheduling

- A. Teacher, teacher leader, building administrator, and district coach mutually develop coaching schedules that allow time for application and reflection with a minimum of coaching contact twice a month.
- B. The APS Approach to Coaching is a job-embedded professional learning model, and every effort should be made to have coaching occur during the duty day.

- C. In order to honor teachers' professional choices around use of time for coaching and impact on instructional time, the following are considerations for structuring time:
- 1) extended specials (elementary only)
 - 2) classroom coverage provided by building (e.g., para-educators, educational assistants, other teachers, substitutes, administrators)
 - 3) planning time
 - 4) master schedule design to support coaching opportunities (secondary only)
 - 5) trade days
 - 6) continuing education credit outside of duty day

Development of APS Approach to Instructional Coaching:

This document was developed by a subcommittee of the coaching task force which has met since 2006 in response to the annual coaching survey results in order to develop recommendations for continuous improvement of the APS Approach to Instructional Coaching.

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