Instructional Coaching Resources

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Defining an Instructional Coach

Every leader, educator, and paraprofessional deserve to realize their personal best in order to serve our students in achieving their fullest potential. Each of us can benefit from having an effective coach who can:

➤ Collect data to help provide an accurate picture of our current reality.

➤ Engage in a feedback cycle to instill positive habits of thinking.

➤ Analyze our actions to refine our craft for greater impact.

Knowledge

- The instructional coaching cycle
- Principles of adult learning andragogy
- How to use, and help others use, data to inform instructional adjustments
- Grade level core standards
- Evidence-based practices and implementation
- Utah Effective Educator Standards
- Teacher Evaluation Systems
- Articulate coach's role related to school/district improvement plan implementation
- Unique differences between grade levels and the amount of modeling required
- How to support induction for new teachers

Skills

- Apply knowledge to engage in tasks that impact teachers in improving student learning outcomes
- Implement the coaching cycle
- Serve as a partner and an instructional leader in the school/district
- Serve as a partner with school/district leadership
- Build professional relationships
- Have crucial conversations
- Deliver job-embedded professional learning
- Facilitate teams
- How to use paraprofessionals effectively
- Prioritize projects and tasks effectively
- Serve as a thought partner
- Integrate new learning/embed it into the system
- Communicate effectively
- Manage and organize
- Use resources to effectively implement actions of the school/district improvement plan goals

Dispositions

- Ability to serve as a district representative while considering local context
- Lifelong learner who continues to seek opportunities for ongoing professional growth
- Strong belief that each student and teacher can grow and learn at high levels
- Exhibit the partnership principles: equality, choice, voice, dialogue, reflection, praxis, reciprocity (Knight, 2018)
- Demonstrate flexibility, resiliency, and empathy

As part of the instructional team led by the principal, an instructional coach is expected to spend their work time engaged in tasks that directly impact teachers in improving student learning outcomes. As such, an instructional coach should not be asked to serve as a/an: evaluator, substitute teacher, clerical aide, recess/lunch duty, behavioral therapist, tester, guidance counselor, interventionist, program manager, contest leader, or any other assignment that disrupts their ability to support teachers to improve instructional practices.

Defining an Instructional Coach

Glossary of Terms

Instructional Coaching Cycle focused on evidence of student achievement and engagement connected to the instructional goals of the teacher. Coaching involves an ongoing cycle of goal-setting, learning, observation and data collection, and reflection.

Personnel Resources individuals in the school and/or district/charter that hold a position that directly impacts improvement goals and student learning outcomes (e.g., grade level teams, school/district leadership, certified instructional support staff [SPED, EL, EdTech]).

Physical Resources items that can be used to directly impact the improvement goals and student learning outcomes (e.g., curriculum, classroom, state and federal funding resources)

The Partnership Principles

The Impact Cycle, by Jim Knight

Equality: In partnerships, one partner does not tell the other what to do; both partners share ideas and make decisions together as equals. Coaches whose interactions embody equality have faith that the teachers they work with bring a lot to any interaction, and they listen with empathy.

Choice: Taking away choice and telling others that they must act a certain way usually guarantees that they will not want to do what we propose. As the saying goes, "When you insist, they will resist." Coaches who act on the principle of choice position teachers as the final decision makers, as partners who choose their coaching goals and decide which practices to adopt and how to interpret data.

Voice: Conversation with a coach should be as open and candid as conversation with a trusted friend. When coaches follow the principle of voice, they expect to learn from their collaborating teachers, and the teachers they coach feel safe expressing what they think and feel. When coaches live out the principle of voice, teachers know that their opinion matters.

Dialogue: When people are partners, their conversation is often a dialogue, a conversation where everyone's ideas are shared through back-and-forth interactions. Coaches who foster dialogue balance advocacy with inquiry. They actively seek out others' ideas, and they share their own ideas in a way that makes it easy for others to share what they think. Dialogue helps instructional coaches set themselves up as thinking partners.

Reflection: Learning often involves the messy muddling through that we often refer to as reflection. As a result, when professionals are told what to do-and when and how to do it, with no room for their own individual thought-there's a good chance they will stop learning. Much of the pleasure of professional growth involves reflecting on what you're learning. When coaches collaborate with teachers by co-creating ideas in reflective conversations, teachers (and coaches) often find those conversations to be engaging, energizing, and valuable.

Praxis: People who engage in praxis apply knowledge and skills to their work, community, or personal lives. For example, a teacher who wants to increase student engagement by telling powerful stories, and then reads about stories and carefully considers how to use them during instruction, is engaged in praxis as I define it. When coaches act with the goal of praxis in mind, they make sure that coaching is productive, meaningful, and helpful to teachers and students.

Reciprocity: Reciprocity is the inevitable outcome of an authentic partnership. When coaches engage in dialogue, reflect, and strive for praxis with their collaborating teachers, they will be engaged in real-life situations and live out the old saying, "When one teaches, two learn." Partnership is about shared learning as much as it is about shared power.

Competencies of a Quality Instructional Coach

Foundations of Instructional Coaching

A Quality Instructional Coach:

▶ Utilizes the USBE coaching model which includes – Pre-partnership, Collaborative Planning, Implementation, Reflection, and Follow-up

▶ Professionally supports teachers in creating and accomplishing goals aligned with the vision and expectations of the school and district through high-quality coaching practices

▶ Effectively improves student outcomes through building the capacity of the educators to use best practices to meet student needs

▶ Builds trusting relationships through clear communication that is non-threatening and objective

▶ Effectively listens and communicates through asking probing and reflective questions

▶ Can help teachers to analyze and utilize data to shift instructional decision making and practices

▶ Understands the differences between elementary and secondary student development and elementary and secondary pedagogy

Adult Learning Theory

A Quality Instructional Coach:

▶ Applies effectively the theories of adult learning theories in coaching and professional learning

▶ Recognizes and support the stages of educators' development and helping to identify and build their level of self-efficacy to increase effectiveness

▶ Understands and applies theories of change that encourage growth mindset and professional progress

▶ Designs and facilitates professional learning using adult learning theory- effectively honors experience and differentiates coaching and professional learning to meet the needs of educators

Instructional Design and Assessment

A Quality Instructional Coach:

▶ Models effective instructional design theories such as backwards design, universal design for learning, explicit instruction, inquiry, and/or collaborative learning

▶ Facilitates and guides alignment of instruction and assessment to state standards and competencies

▶ Uses technology effectively to engage teachers in professional learning and in data-driven instruction

▶ Understands assessment designs and the different modalities of assessing students

▶ Facilitates data analysis of different formative and summative assessments to inform instruction

▶ Models and facilitates instructional planning through intentional pacing, alignment to frameworks, and mapping out concepts to ensure that an effective sequence is followed

▶ Utilizes a strong knowledge of evidence-based resources to evaluate them to meet the needs of students and uses it to identify options for differentiation and tiered instruction

▶ Encourages students to engage in self-reflection through modeling and supporting educators to use this practice

Competencies of a Quality Instructional Coach

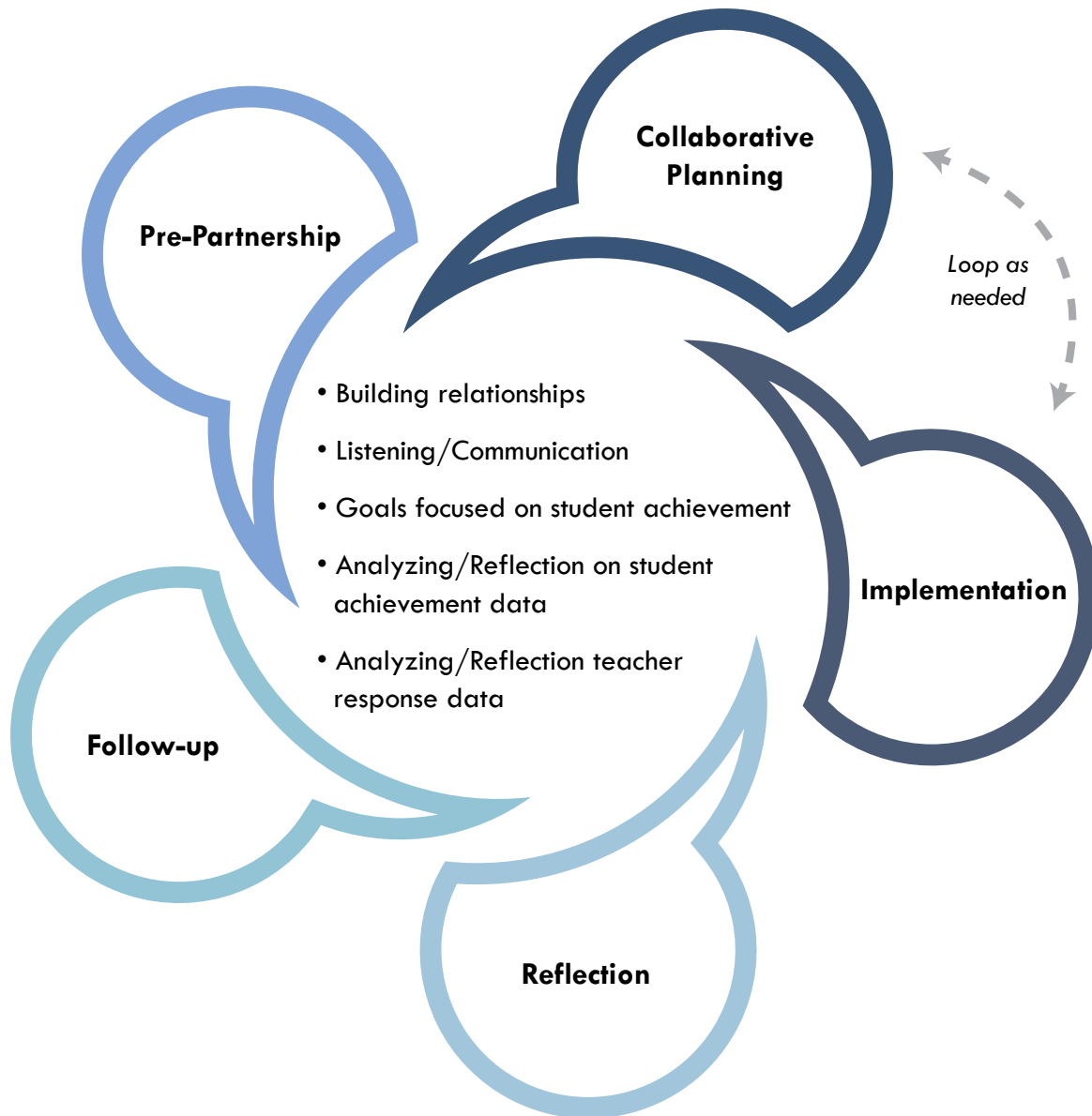## Strategies for Effective Instructional Delivery

A Quality Instructional Coach:

▶ Shares current research on best and most effective strategies supported by LEA for delivery and engagement

▶ Collects data and shares strategies to help educators increase student engagement, motivation, and participation promoting effective, positive classroom management

▶ Has a deep knowledge of Utah's Effective Teaching Standards

Effective Leadership and Collaboration

A Quality Instructional Coach:

▶ Fosters positive, productive relationships with all stakeholders that allow for effective collaboration

▶ Effectively creates an alignment of state, district, school, team, and individual goals for educators

▶ Advocates for and models equity across all practices

▶ Advocates for and models self-advocacy by educators and students

▶ Facilitates critical conversations and conflict resolution

▶ Engages in continued learning, growth, and reflection on instructional coaching practices

Coaching Cycle Model

Collaborative Planning

Pre-Partnership

Loop as needed

- Building relationships
- Listening/Communication
- Goals focused on student achievement
- Analyzing/Reflection on student achievement data
- Analyzing/Reflection teacher response data

Implementation

Follow-up

Reflection

Pre-Partnership

Gather context
- Observe/gather student data
- Build relationship

Collaborative Planning

Goal setting

- Identify student needs based on data
- Measurable goals in context of school setting
- Start and end dates with measurable "look-fors" between designing lesson/plan best practices/strategies

Implementation

Support Based on Goal
- Modeling/Co-teaching
- Videoing
- Data collection
- Provide feedback/Next steps
- Reflect on lesson

Reflection

Impact of Goal

- Reflection /Review
- Conversation
- Student data analysis
- Set next goal

Follow-up

Initial and ongoing goal check-in to support continued student achievement