Tell us what *you* think of T3

This is the last issue of *Teachers Teaching Teachers* for the 2005-06 school year. We want to know what you think of this new publication. T3 is the only newsletter being published specifically for educators who work as school-based staff developers. We want to ensure that we continue to meet your needs but we need your help to do that.

Please follow the link below to answer a few questions about T3 and your challenges as a school-based coach. The survey should take only a few minutes. The survey will be available online until May 22.

T3 survey link:

www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB22593PFNAUX

Vol. 1, No. 8
May 2006

TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS™

FOR A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF TEACHER LEADERS

ROLE: Classroom supporter

PURPOSE: To increase the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction.

BY JOELLEN KILLION AND CYNTHIA HARRISON

Last in an eight-part series about roles of the school-based coach

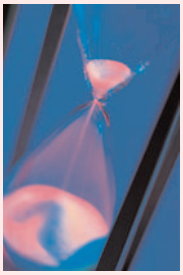
Coaches spend a great deal of their time working directly with teachers in their classrooms. In the role of classroom supporter, coaches choose from a range of possible support options. (See continuum at right.)

Model/ demonstrate | Co-teach | Observe and give feedback on instruction or management

This range of options is built on the theory of gradual release. Over time, the teacher assumes more responsibility for owning or enacting the new behaviors.

When a coach chooses to **model or demonstrate**, she does so in a classroom of students similar to the teacher's or in the teacher's classroom with his students. The coach co-plans a lesson, often in collaboration with the teacher, and conducts the lesson with the teacher or a group of teachers observing. Sometimes, coaches teach part-time in a demonstration classroom in which they model instructional practices for visitors who may observe within the classroom or "behind the glass." Coaches choose modeling when a teaching practice is new, when teachers feel uncertain about how to implement a

WHAT'S INSIDE



National Staff Development Council
(800) 727-7288
www.nsdc.org

Our goal: All teachers in all schools will experience high-quality professional learning as part of their daily work.

SCENARIO:

Classroom supporter at work

Bill Jackson, a differentiation coach, serves two elementary schools and a middle school. He spends one day a week at each elementary school and two days at the middle school. When he is on-site at his three schools, he divides his time working with teams of teachers planning and demonstrating, co-teaching, and observing individual teachers. Weekly, he concentrates on one grade-level team at the elementary and several interdisciplinary teams at the middle school. The week before he is scheduled to work with a grade or team, Jackson meets with the teachers to plan how he can best support them during his next visit. A look at part of one day in Jackson's schedule provides an example of how he serves as a classroom supporter.

Tuesday, Jansen Elementary

Time	Action
7:45 am	Meet with the 4th-grade team to plan work with the team next Tuesday.
8:30 am	Model tiering, the newest differentiation strategy in Ellie Repp's classroom. Frances Chevalier, another 2nd-grade teacher, slips in to observe the demonstration lesson.
9:10 am	Debrief with Repp and Chevalier in Repp's classroom while her students are engaged in seat work.
9:30 am	Observe Phil Cook using learning centers. By prior agreement, observe how three students respond to the strategy.
10:00 am	Reviews notes for meeting with Phil Cook.
10:30 am	The principal slips into Cook's class so Cook and Jackson can meet in the conference room. Jackson uses the descriptive protocol to share data from the lesson. Together, they discuss the implications of the data and plan for Cook's next steps.
11:00 am	Co-teach with Barbara Black.
11:30 am	Eat lunch with the 2nd-grade team. The four teachers share what they have learned during the morning and how they can use the new differentiation strategies.

In a typical morning, Jackson holds three meetings with teachers, models a differentiation strategy, and co-teaches another. He moves quickly and fluidly among the various aspects of this role, prepared for each one.

** Fictitious names and school*

new practice, when teachers have some disbelief or concern about how the practice will work with their students, or when a model or exemplar of the practice is needed.

Coaches may choose **co-teaching** as an option for classroom support. Co-teaching is the practice of sharing responsibility equally with the teacher. Both work collaboratively to plan the lesson and determine in advance the role each will play in the lesson. Sometimes, the division of responsibility falls along various aspects of the lesson design. For example, the teacher may review the previous lesson and present the lesson's objective and introduce the co-teacher.

The co-teacher (coach) may then activate students' background knowledge. Coaches choose co-teaching when the teacher has developed a beginning level of understanding and comfort with the new practice and when the teacher is ready to try the practice. Occasionally, coaches will encounter teachers who are so comfortable with the coach modeling that they resist co-teaching. Gentle urging is one strategy to encourage teachers to take the risk to co-teach with the coach.

A third option for the coach as classroom supporter is **observing and offering feedback through reflection conferences** (Costa & Garmston, 2002). In this stance, the coach usually, although not always, meets with the teacher before observing the lesson to determine the area of focus for the observation. The coach watches the teacher conduct a lesson, gathers data on a mutually agreed-upon focus area, and meets with the teacher following the lesson to debrief what occurred. The coach uses one of a number of feedback protocols to assist the teacher in reflecting on his or her lesson. A coach chooses observing and giving feedback when teachers have implemented the new practices within their own

T3 has presented one role of the school-based coach each month.

9 roles of the school-based coach

- Catalyst for change (T3, April 2006)
- **Classroom supporter**
- Curriculum specialist (T3, Feb. 2006)
- Data coach (T3, Oct. 2005)
- Instructional specialist (T3, March 2006)
- Learning facilitator (T3, Sept. 2005)
- Mentor (T3, Nov. 2005)
- Resource provider
- School leader (T3, Dec./Jan. 2006)

From *9 Roles of the School-Based Coach* by Joellen Killion and Cynthia Harrison

classrooms independently and are ready to receive feedback on their practice.

Knowledge and skills

The knowledge and skills a coach uses as a classroom supporter are extensive. When demonstrating, coaches have a deep understanding of the curriculum and instructional strategies and use the skills of master teachers. In co-teaching, coaches use their knowledge of curriculum, assessment, and instruction along with the specific skills of honoring the partner teacher, making agreements, and sharing responsibility. As an observer and feedback provider, the coach knows the elements of effective instruction. In addition, the coach uses skills in observation, data collection, analysis, giving feedback, promoting metacognition and reflection in, on, and for practice, and building trusting relationships. Most importantly, coaches in this role know how to move teachers along the continuum so that teachers develop independence rather than dependence. All dimensions of this role rest on the coach's ability to build trusting relationships, demonstrate respect for the teacher, listen fully, and communicate clearly and concisely.

Challenges

The greatest challenge a coach faces in this role is getting stuck on the demonstration end of the classroom supporter continuum. While this is an easy way to show teachers what instruction and learning might look like, it is also a comfortable place for teachers to stay because they have less responsibility and accountability for student learning as an observer of a demonstration lesson. Coaches also sometimes find it easier to demonstrate rather than co-teach because that means they fully control the success of the lesson.

A danger in co-teaching is overstepping agreed-upon boundaries to take over for the teacher if the lesson is not going well. When observing and giving feedback, a coach sometimes faces the challenge of balancing warm and cool feedback in an artful way that helps the teacher clearly know the areas for improvement, while not overwhelming the teacher with too much information. A tremendous challenge for coaches is knowing when and how to move the teacher along the continuum to increase the teacher's responsibility and accountability for student learning while ensuring that the teacher is both comfortable and confident. ◆

A danger in co-teaching is overstepping agreed-upon boundaries to take over for the teacher if the lesson is not going well.

NEW WEB SITE FOR NSDC MEMBERS ONLY

The members-only area of the NSDC web site has been redesigned and expanded, thanks to an exciting partnership with Microsoft Partners in Learning.

New features include:

- **New staff development communities:** Discussion areas designed to support collaboration and information sharing among members with similar concerns.
- **NSDC members library:** Full archives of NSDC publications, links to valuable web resources, and a special collection of staff development tools organized in one place.
- **Professional development in the news:** Links to current news stories about professional development policies and practices.

You'll find everything you've come to expect from NSDC's web site plus more!

NSDC thanks the Microsoft Partners in Learning Program for its support in building this site for members.

To log into the new web site, follow these easy steps:

1. Go to members.nsdc.org.
2. Use your NSDC membership ID (on the mailing label of this publication) and the password **learning** in the box that opens.
3. Fill out a quick profile of yourself for members to see.
4. Create a unique password.
5. Use your NSDC membership ID and new password to access the entire site.

Questions? E-mail tracy.crow@nsdc.org for answers.

Building confidence is part of the coach's job

BY JOAN RICHARDSON

After four years as an instructional coach, Ric Palma said he often believes his most important contribution may simply be helping teachers believe in themselves.

"Teachers tend to forget about so much that they do right. They get so discouraged. I think most teachers are pretty self-reflective. But they tend to focus on what's gone wrong instead of what they do that's right," he said.

"Teachers usually come in pretty starry-eyed. Then they get a tough group of kids and they lose heart. They need a boost to keep them going," he said.

When he encounters a teacher like that, Palma said he starts by trying to get them to remember why they began teaching. "And then I try to give them something that they can use right away, something that I know will produce some quick results for them. If they see the effect with kids, they feel better about themselves and they're more likely to try other new ideas," he said.

Palma is one of nine instructional coaches in Topeka (Kansas) Public Schools USD 501, but the only one working with the 125 teachers at Topeka High School. He had spent 15 years as an English teacher at the high school before becoming a coach four years ago.

Palma is part of the Pathways to Success program, a multiyear partnership between the Kansas University Center for Research on Learning, the Topeka district, and the International Telementor Program. Pathways is funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Gear-Up program whose mission is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Palma and the other coaches are actually university employees, a situation which allows the coaches to avoid being entangled in many

Ric Palma, an instructional coach at Topeka High School, is an employee of Kansas University.

RIC PALMA

Position: Instructional coach

School: Topeka High School

School district: Topeka Unified School District 501, Topeka, Kansas

Professional history: Taught English, language arts at Topeka High School for 15 years and adult education classes during summers. Coached high school baseball team for five years. Became instructional coach in 2002.

Education: Earned his bachelor's degree in education from Kansas State University. Currently working towards master's degree at Baker University.

school tasks since they are not employees of the school or district.

Palma's week begins every Monday morning by meeting with 15 other leaders at his school, including the principal, assistant principals, student achievement coordinator, social worker, and others. Following a protocol established by Pathways for Success, he asks the group about the most pressing concern for the week and then talks with them about options for addressing the concern. Palma also describes work he did during the previous week. This weekly meeting ensures that there is good communication between building administrators and the coach about the coach's work.

Each Monday afternoon, Palma works with the other instructional coaches in the district, typically focusing on a series of research-based instructional and behavior management strategies that have proven effective with at-risk students.

The rest of the week "depends on where I'm needed," he said. He estimates that he spends 15 to 20% of his time modeling lessons or observing teachers and about a quarter of his time talking one on one with teachers. He does a "little more clerical work than I would like," identifying materials, copying materials, and running them over to teachers' classrooms.

"We're charting our time now to see exactly how we are spending our time," he said.

Teachers who want to meet with him simply email him or leave a message for him on the white board attached to his office door. Typically, they present a problem they want help solving or simply express a desire to try something new. Palma meets individually with the teacher. "I get as much background as I can. Then I get back with them about a strategy they might want to try," he said.

Once he's introduced the teacher to the strategy, the teacher can either try it alone or invite Palma to model it in the classroom. "Teachers like to have me model it for them because kids generally pay a little more attention when the instructional coach is there. That means they get a pretty good handle on what we're trying to do. That helps the teacher two ways. Then, the teacher will use the strategy and we'll meet for a follow-up. I'll ask questions like, 'what did you do well, what areas do you need to work on,' " he said.

When he observes classrooms, Palma often audio- or videotapes the teachers he's observing. Frequently, he leaves the tape with the teacher to look at alone. "I've learned that, as soon as they see it, they can see what's going on. It seems to work better if they watch it alone," he said.

"This job has really taught me the importance of self-reflection. For the most part, teachers do that naturally. They may know that a lesson didn't work but they haven't identified a method for improving their work. That's where I come in," he said.

Palma estimates that about half of what he does is relatively informal work. "It's just listening and holding up a mirror so teachers can see themselves," he said.

"You'd be surprised how much a little confidence helps improve someone's teaching," he said. ◆

NSDC PROFILE
RIC PALMA

When he observes classrooms, Palma often audio- or videotapes the teachers he's observing. Frequently, he leaves the tape with the teacher to look at alone.

FOCUS ON THE NSDC **STANDARDS**

Fearless evaluation is a key part of coaching

Evaluation frightens most people, even though it's a process they use constantly. Do I like that color? Was lunch tasty? Is this new style attractive? Are these new clubs better than the ones I have been using? We ask these kinds of evaluation questions every day.

Evaluation is a high-level thinking process to determine the merit, value, quality, worth, or importance of someone or something. Unfortunately, some evaluation happens without predetermined criteria or careful consideration of the attributes of what is being evaluated.

Evaluation is part of what teacher leaders do in their classrooms and in their work with peers. They engage in evaluation when they determine which resources are most appropriate to use with a group of students reading below grade level. They do it when they examine instructional strategies to determine which might be most appropriate for a particular concept and group of students. They do it to engage in continuous improvement and to measure the impact of their work.

EVALUATION

Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.

There are two forms of evaluation — formative and summative.

• **Formative evaluation** looks at what is occurring within the process. It asks questions such as: Are we doing what we planned? Do we have the resources we want? Is the program being implemented as we hoped?

The questions below can serve to guide formative evaluations:

- Are we doing what we planned to do?
- Are people doing what we hoped they would do?
- Are we using the resources as we planned?
- What changes are we making to accommodate surprises along the way?

• **Summative evaluation,** on the other hand, looks at what happened as a result of the program or project undertaken. It asks questions such as: What happened as a result of using this strategy? Did we achieve the goal we established?

The questions below guide summative evaluations:

- Did we achieve our goals?
- If not, what might have interfered?
- If we did, what contributed to our success?
- What did we learn to apply to other similar situations?

NSDC's standard on evaluation advises that those engaged in evaluation use multiple sources of information to improve practices and measure results. Multiple sources of data help ensure that the results we are observing are not influenced by a particular source or form of data and that we are not looking at skewed information. For example, if a school improvement team looks only at student achievement data through the lens of the state assessment, it sees only one view of student learning taken at one point in time. The team gets a more accurate view of student learning if it looks at student grades, performance on benchmark assessments, and classroom work.

The process of evaluation seems challenging, and it does not need to be. The eight steps outlined in *Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development* (NSDC, 2002) can be applied to the evaluation of any educational program.

Step 1: Assess evaluability.

This step asks program managers and evaluators to determine if the program is ready for evaluation. Are the goals clear and specific? Is the program design powerful and sufficient? Are the benchmark indicators of success established?

Step 2: Formulate evaluation questions.

The evaluator develops both the formative and summative evaluation questions that the

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For more information about the NSDC Standards for Staff Development, see www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm

evaluation will answer.

Step 3: Construct the evaluation framework.

The evaluator plans the evaluation by identifying the data sources, data collection methods, data collection timeline, and planned data analysis.

Step 4: Collect data.

The evaluator collects the data as planned.

Step 5: Organize and analyze data.

The evaluator organizes the data for analysis and applies analysis techniques to the data.

Step 6: Interpret the analyzed data.

The evaluator, working together with stakeholders, studies the analyzed data and seeks to construct meaning from the data.

Step 7: Report findings.

In this step, evaluators report what they have learned from the evaluation to the various stakeholder groups involved with the project.

Step 8: Evaluate the evaluation.

This step asks the evaluator to review his or her work as an evaluator and the process used and to reflect on the work in order to learn and improve it.

Following these eight steps, teacher leaders can feel comfortable engaged in evaluation. The steps can be applied with academic rigor or informality to virtually any evaluation task.

Even if teacher leaders are not engaged in formal evaluation work, they will want to integrate "evaluation think" into their routine work. The five, simple questions below can be useful in practicing evaluation think. They can be used to structure a department meeting about the curriculum, a team meeting on student engagement, or a school improvement meeting on the new math initiative.

- What's working?
- How do we know?
- What's not working?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do about it?

Continuous improvement depends on the ability to evaluate using multiple sources of information to both improve practice and to measure results. Teacher leaders often are responsible for leading evaluation to guide the continuous improvement within their schools. Using the eight steps outlined above or the "evaluation think" questions, they can be confident and successful in any evaluation work they do. ◆

Continuous improvement depends on the ability to evaluate using multiple sources of information to both improve practice and to measure results.

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COACH'S TIME CHART

How do you spend your time each week? Keeping track of your time during a week will be helpful as you talk with the building principal or other supervisor about your work.

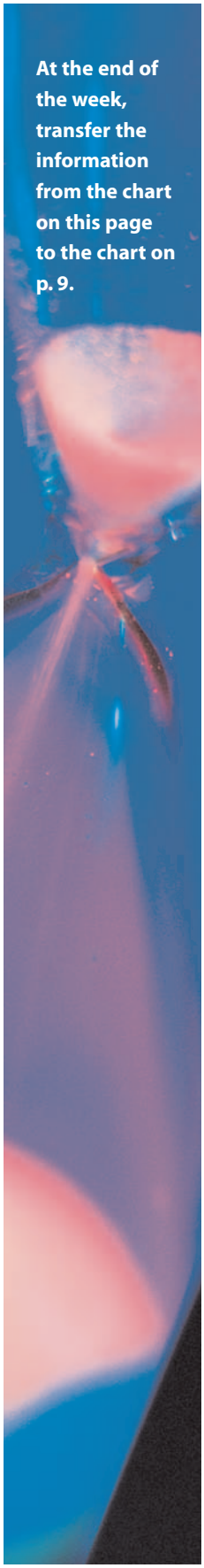
- Make five copies of this chart and keep track of how you use your time every day for one work week.
- Record the work you do in 20-minute increments.

MY WORK OF THE DAY

Day _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO ELSE WAS INVOLVED?
7 - 7:20 a.m.		
7:20 - 7:40 a.m.		
7:40 - 8 a.m.		
8 - 8:20 a.m.		
8:20 - 8:40 a.m.		
8:40 - 9 a.m.		
9 - 9:20 a.m.		
9:20 - 9:40 a.m.		
9:40 - 10 a.m.		
10 - 10:20 a.m.		
10:20 - 10:40 a.m.		
10:40 - 11 a.m.		
11 - 11:20 a.m.		
11:20 - 11:40 a.m.		
11:40 am - noon		
noon - 12:20 p.m.		
12:20 - 12:40 p.m.		
12:40 - 1 p.m.		
1 - 1:20 p.m.		
1:20 - 1:40 p.m.		
1:40 pm - 2 p.m.		
2 - 2:20 p.m.		
2:20 - 2:40 p.m.		
2:40 - 3 p.m.		
3 - 3:20 p.m.		
3:20 - 3:40 p.m.		
3:40 - 4 p.m.		

At the end of the week, transfer the information from the chart on this page to the chart on p. 9.



To make this go more quickly, you may want to use a **colored marker** or **highlighter** to identify each category of work before you transfer information from the chart on p. 8 to the chart below.

MY WORK OF THE WEEK

Create simple categories for keeping track of your time use. For example, you might create categories for:

- Identifying resources for teachers
- Meeting one-on-one with a teacher
- Observing a classroom
- Modeling a lesson
- Meeting with a grade-level group
- Doing paperwork

Keeping track of time by category

- Use check marks to indicate how many 20-minute increments were used for each activity.
- Multiply your marks by 20 to arrive at the number of minutes that were used for each activity.
- When you have done this for each category, calculate the percentage of time devoted to each task during the week.

CATEGORIES OF WORK	CHECKS		MINUTES
Identifying resources for teachers	✔✔✔✔✔✔	(6 x 20=)	120
Meeting one-on-one with a teacher			
Observing a classroom			
Modeling a lesson			
Planning with a grade-level group			
Introducing a new strategy to a grade-level group			
Analyzing data with one teacher or a group of teachers			
Advance planning with a teacher			
Debriefing lesson with a teacher			
Doing paperwork			
Other			