

Developing a partnership agreement between a coach and a principal

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND BOUNDARIES

Agree on the roles coaches will fill within the school, other responsibilities the coach will have, such as teacher duties, etc., and what coaches will not do.

Coach

- What expectations do you have of me and the work I do?
- What responsibilities will I have as a member of this staff?
- What are the boundaries of my work?
- What is outside the boundaries of my work?
- How do you feel about me ... serving on a district committee, facilitating a school committee, etc.

Principal

- What do you expect of me?
- What do we think teachers expect of you?
- What does the district expect of you?
- What are the defined responsibilities of your role as a coach?
- How much flexibility do we have to adjust your work to meet the needs of our students and staff?

CLIENTS

Identify who the coach will work with: teams of teachers, individual teachers, novice teachers, departments/grade levels/teams, etc.

Coach

- Which teachers will I work with?
- How will I determine which teachers to work with?

Principal

- Where are the greatest needs in our school?
- Which teachers have expressed interest in receiving your support?

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Specify the support and resources the coach can expect.

Coach

- Here is how you can support me in my role as a coach ...
- What resources are available for me? Technology? Space? Money for professional publications or development?

Principal

- What support do you want from me?
- What resources do you need to feel comfortable?
- Here's how you will share in the school's resources for professional development ...

EXPECTED RESULTS

Identify the expected results of the coach's work. Define process goals which describe how the coach will work and results goals which describe the outcome of the work. For example:

Process: *The coach will work one-on-one with 75% of the staff and every grade level.*

Results: *Student achievement on the state math assessment will increase by 20% over the next two years.*

Coach

- What percentage of the staff do you expect me to work with?
- What results do you expect over the next year, two years, and three years?
- What are the school improvement goals?

Principal

- What procedural goals are appropriate for your work in this school?
- Here are our improvement goals...

By answering these questions, a principal and a school-based coach can develop a set of agreements that can guide their work in a school. Being clear about the parameters and expectations for the coach's work also helps a principal explain to staff this important new role in a school.

TIMELINES

Setting timelines for achieving goals gives the coach and the principal the ability to measure progress toward their goals so that they can make mid-course adjustments.

<p>Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When do you want this finished? • What are the short- and long-term timelines for my work? 	<p>Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will you be able to meet with all departments? • When will you complete one-on-one visits with every teacher?
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COMMUNICATION

Decide when to communicate, how often to communicate, and the purpose of your communication.

<p>Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When shall we meet to discuss my work plan? How often shall we meet to discuss my work? 	<p>Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When can we meet to discuss how you plan your work to serve teachers?
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PROCESSES

Identify the processes the coach will use for various tasks, such as providing services to teachers, deciding priorities, how often to work with individual teachers or teams of teachers, how teachers access coaching services, how to document their work, how to report their accomplishments, etc.

<p>Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What process do we want to establish to help teachers access my assistance? • What is the best way for me to spend the majority of my time? • How will I log my work? What evidence do you want? 	<p>Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What process do you think will help teachers access your services easily and conveniently? • How will you demonstrate how you spend your time?
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CONFIDENTIALITY

Be explicit about what is confidential and how to alert each other about confidentiality concerns.

<p>Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information do you expect me to provide about my work with individual teachers or teams of teachers? • What agreements will allow teachers to feel comfortable interacting with me, sharing their strengths and weaknesses, and being willing to take risks to change their instructional practices? • What's the best way for me to tell you when I feel you are asking for information that is outside our agreement area? 	<p>Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What agreements will allow teachers to feel comfortable interacting with me, sharing their strengths and weaknesses, and being willing to take risks to change their instructional practices? • How will we monitor our agreements about confidentiality?
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See the Winter 2007 issue of *JSD* to learn more about how principals can support school-based coaches.

Source: Adapted from *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, by Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison. NSDC, 2006.

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