



Nancy Booth is an instructional coach for Boone County Schools in Madison, W.V.

Year starts with a day for data

Q How do you help teachers use data?

In our district, everyone comes together before school starts for a paid day to examine data. Teachers are in groups according to their subject or grade level. They get a report for the whole school that shows what percent of kids had correct responses under each of the state standards. They also get individual reports for their own students. They identify the low and marginal scores. Then teachers decide as a group how to bring up achievement in those areas and why those areas are deficient, and that's where coaches step in. So coaches might interject, "Where would this content standard fit if you're teaching a module? How can we hit this objective two or three times? Can we fit it in different places so the kids will be exposed to it more than once?"

The greatest challenge of coaching, whether you're working with data or anything else, is getting the teachers to know that they need help. As a teacher for 30 years, that was my area of expertise, I thought. There were a lot of times I didn't realize I needed help.

Building rapport is important for all coaches — letting teachers know that you're one of them, that you think of yourself as a teacher first and that you're willing to help down in the trenches. You want them to know you're willing to do the slug work so they're free to teach. And when you do that for them, they'll turn around and they'll feel more comfortable with you and ask you to do other things which are more meaningful — co-teach with them or work with them on a big project or help them see another way to teach a particular content objective that maybe they haven't thought about before. ♦

Prepare your coaches for success!



Let NSDC create a Coaches Academy to enhance the knowledge, skills, and practices of your school-based instructional coaches so they can improve the teaching practices of your school staff.

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We will customize an academy that meets the unique needs of your school district.

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- Montgomery County Public Schools, Md.
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