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# First, make sure teachers are heard

**Q** How do you help create a positive climate in a school striving for a turnaround?

I spend a lot of time talking to kids, to teachers. If a teacher has a bad day, I try to talk to the teacher about what went well. There are always good things that happen during the day. I make sure as a coach that teachers do not go home without someone listening to them. I ask how I can help. Part of coaching is knowing how to read the teacher and meeting the needs of each individual. Some of them just need somebody to talk to.

We use a district Teach for Success form when we do classroom observations that looks for specific things. And we use two coaches for observations, so one can take over the classroom after an observation and the other can take the teacher out and give feedback. We figure out the teacher's strengths and one thing we'd like to target. We provide immediate feedback, so it's fresh in everybody's

mind, and we might model right then that one thing.

When I first came, it was important that the other coach and I made sure we had the same objectives. We have to think alike. So we did a lot of observations together practicing and made sure we were in sync and were seeing the same things, and we would discuss that before we went in to the classroom and gave feedback. We have to all be moving in the same direction.

We are very data-driven here. The school has a data board in the conference room, and each teacher has an individual data board in the classroom so they can see where each child is in his or her learning. All the kids are color coded by where they fall on the state assessment categories, and when a student is assessed, the teacher reclassifies the student. Then, during grade-level meetings, we discuss with the teachers each individual child. And we celebrate each success. ♦

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