

# Tools *for* LEARNING SCHOOLS

LEARNING FORWARD'S VISION: EXCELLENT TEACHING AND LEARNING EVERY DAY

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## COACHES' MULTIPLE ROLES SUPPORT TEACHING AND LEARNING

By Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison

Since Learning Forward published the first edition of *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-Based Leaders* (2006), we've seen the body of evidence grow in support of coaching as a valuable strategy for promoting teaching quality and student success. Because coaching programs vary among districts and even among schools within a district, coaches' roles also vary greatly. Despite differences among roles, the coach's primary purpose is to improve student learning by providing direct support to teachers.

### CLARIFYING ROLES OF COACHES

Framing how coaches work with their colleagues is a major decision that school and district leaders face when they implement coaching to improve teaching and student learning. In the second edition of *Taking the Lead*, which draws on our research and work with hundreds of coaches, we discuss the importance of articulating coaches' complex roles before implementing coaching programs. We revisit the 10 coach roles that we identified in the first edition and elaborate on those definitions. We also offer leaders guid-

ance in creating conditions supportive to coaching.

Administrators clarify coaches' roles so that the daily work of coaching remains focused on achieving coaching program goals. While some variation is useful to respond to unique needs within each school, the greater the consistency

district coaching programs can show in coaches' purposes and work, the more likely those programs will realize positive results for improving teaching and learning. When district or school leaders implement coaching, they may consider how to use the coaching framework (Killion, Harrison, Bryan, & Clifton, 2012) to determine the purpose and goals of the program. It helps leaders

and planning committees specify which roles are most appropriate to achieve stated goals. In addition, planners may use the summary role framework to clarify what a coach does each day as well as the decisions he or she makes with a supervisor. The summary role framework is included in this issue of *Tools for Learning Schools* (pp. 5-7).

Naming the roles gives everyone a common language with which to consider the work of coaches. A recent report on coaching suggests that teachers demonstrate greater willingness to work with a coach when the coach's role is clear (The University of Florida Lastinger Center, Learning For-

*Continued on p. 2*



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ward, & Public Impact, 2016). So, when leaders and staff are presented with coaching opportunities characterized by clearly defined roles, they may better understand the nature of potential support, be better able to examine their individual needs, and align roles and actions of coaches most effectively. Likewise, by using the language associated with each role, coaches can be specific in partnership-agreement meetings with principals and teachers about the scope of their work and options for support. Coaches can also account for their time by role and work with other educators to consider their highest priorities for coaches (see tool on pp. 8-9).

### TEN ROLES OF COACHES

The 10 roles of district or school-based coaches are:

1. Resource provider;
2. Data coach;
3. Instructional specialist;
4. Curriculum specialist;
5. Classroom supporter;
6. Learning facilitator;
7. Mentor;
8. School leader;
9. Catalyst for change; and
10. Learner.

Each of these roles is distinct; in real life, coaches typically fill multiple roles simultaneously. The number of roles is not what makes coaching difficult, rather it's the agility required of a coach to serve successfully in different roles. Juggling the demands of multiple roles and responsibilities; different individual teacher needs, goals, learning preferences, and personalities; classroom dynamics, daily schedules, and diverse curricula can be taxing. Coaches need to be flexible, yet consistent. Having support of strong fundamentals — clear coaching program goals, defined coach roles, knowledge and skills to fulfill those roles — allows coaches to act with consistency and accountability. Agreements between coaches and the administrators responsible

for overseeing their work help to clarify roles and responsibilities (see pp. 15-19).

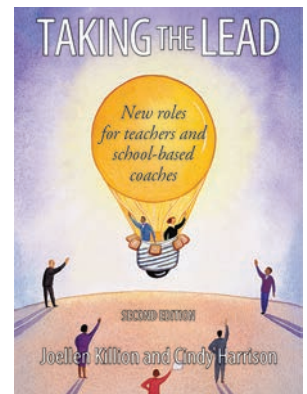
### CURRICULUM SPECIALIST: EXPLORING ONE ROLE IN DEPTH

All coaches typically have some responsibility to assist teachers with implementing the adopted curriculum. This role is particularly important for coaches serving in content-specific roles such as literacy or math coaches. Because many teachers have been consumers rather than developers

of curriculum guides, their understanding of curriculum may be limited. Content standards are evolving and becoming more rigorous. As standards shift student expectations from knowing about the content to applying the content in authentic ways, teachers may need help developing deeper understanding of the confluence of written, assessed, and taught curricula and content.

**Understanding curriculum.** Curriculum specialists support teachers in meeting their responsibilities to apply the adopted local- or state-adopted curriculum so that students achieve expected outcomes. Coaches sometimes begin their work with teachers with a fundamental lesson: understanding what a curriculum is and what it isn't. Curriculum describes the concepts and skills, the sequence in which they are taught, the key benchmarks for demonstrating achievement of the content—essentially what students are expected to learn — and when they are expected to learn it. Some districts and states specify broad curricula and then design assessments to measure student progress on and achievement of the standards. Districts, too, may provide teachers with pacing guides that define the specific point during a school year at which certain skills are taught and how they align vertically and horizontally within and across curricula. Even when districts provide such curricular tools, teachers are still responsible for accessing, understanding, and using them in the design of units of instruction and associated lesson plans. To do this, coaches as curriculum specialists support teachers in making decisions about the content of their lessons (see tool on pp. 11-13).

**Deepening content knowledge.** A significant responsibility of a coach is reinforcing and building teacher content knowledge so that the curriculum is accurately applied. Coaches may use this information to plan appropriate professional learning, model lessons, or co-teach. Or, working directly with teachers, they may share results-based coaching conversations to decide on the standards-based goals for student learning. Curriculum-specialist coaches help teachers sequence learning so that individual lessons complement and contribute to deeper learning of the key concepts. They encourage teachers to think about the developmental nature



The second edition explores 10 roles in depth and offers guidance to support coaching work effectively.

### Learning Forward BELIEF

More students achieve when educators assume collective responsibility for student learning.

*Continued on p. 3*

*Continued from p. 2*

of curriculum — what came before and what comes after specific units and lessons — and to determine the level of understanding required. Coaches as curriculum specialists also help teachers use the curriculum as they analyze assessment data and, when needed, determine how to fill gaps in student learning and to enrich or accelerate student learning.

**Spanning multiple disciplines for authentic learning.** College- and career-ready content standards emphasize the authentic application of learning across disciplines. Coaches help teachers integrate content from multiple disciplines so that student learning experiences are more meaningful and relevant to their daily lives. For example, secondary coaches may ensure that teachers of all curricular areas understand how to embed literacy within their content areas. A coach might use a unit-planning, lesson-planning, or weekly-planning template as she works with individual teachers or teams. Coaches might also help teachers unpack a standard to identify the essential knowledge and skills embedded within the standard and to determine how to sequence instruction on the knowledge and skills to ensure that students meet the standard.

**Designing assessments to measure learning outcomes.** Finally, coaches might use assessment frameworks to guide teachers in designing assessments that accurately measure the expected student outcomes at the appropriate developmental level. Many schools and districts have large-scale and benchmark assessments that measure student progress on and achievement of the defined curriculum. Coaches help teachers use the curriculum to (a) design assessments of student learning, including common assessments; (b) adapt their daily curriculum to make necessary adjustments to personalize and enrich student learning to ensure all students succeed; and (c) use the curriculum as a basis for formative and summative assessment of and reporting on student learning.

School- and district-based coaches have complex, multifaceted roles. Their broader goal, though, is simple: Coaches positively affect student learning by providing direct support to teachers. To increase the likelihood of success in your coaching program, use the following tools to define coaching roles, manage coaches work, and to support coaches in roles in which they need to help teachers implement an adopted curriculum with deep understanding of content, learning outcomes aligned with standards, and various forms of assessments.

## REFERENCES

- Killion, J., Harrison, C., Bryan, C., & Clifton, H. (2012)** *Coaching matters*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.
- The University of Florida Lastinger Center, Learning Forward & Public Impact. (2016).** *Coaching for impact*:



**“The role of curriculum specialist was especially intriguing to me, as I have been called on to spend a great deal of my time this year in this capacity. ... The primary function of this role is to ensure implementation of adopted curriculum, but I am struggling with the earlier stage of [the district’s] adopting curriculum, at least in a manner that communicates more clearly to teachers. Understanding the scope and sequence of and having access to district curriculum that is housed in many different locations have been particularly difficult.”**

— Aaron Knodel,  
NBCT Instructional Coach, Sheyenne High School,  
West Fargo Public Schools, West Fargo, North Dakota

*Six pillars to create coaching roles that achieve their potential to improve teaching and learning.* Gainesville; Oxford, OH; Chapel Hill, NC: Authors. Available at <https://learningforward.org/docs/default-source/pdf/coaching-for-impact.pdf/>. ●

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# OVERVIEW OF COACH ROLES

<b>Purpose</b>	Use this framework, which includes a description of each of the 10 roles with examples of responsibilities, to provide an overview of the roles.	
<b>Recommended time</b>	1 hour	
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roles of Instructional Coaches, pp. 6-7</li> </ul>	
<b>Steps</b>	1. Facilitator explains the structure of the Roles of Instructional Coaches chart — role definition, responsibilities, and an example of an action a coach might take in a specific role. Participants can use this explanation to compare and contrast roles, examine which responsibilities align with each role designation, introduce roles, or discuss roles to include in a new coaching program.	20 minutes
	2. Facilitator invites participants to move into five small groups and divides up the roles among them. If needed, they increase or decrease the number of roles per group. If participants have copies of <i>Taking the Lead</i> , they complete a jigsaw activity to dive deep into the role descriptions. If not, participants discuss which roles are relevant or essential in their context.	20 minutes
	3. After the report on roles, the participants identify the 3–4 most important roles for their district to focus on given that coaches can’t effectively perform all 10 roles simultaneously.	20 minutes
	4. Participants return to the full group to discuss which roles are most important for the district and why.	10 minutes

**Source:** Adapted from Killion, J., & Harrison, C. (2017). *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, Second edition. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

## Roles of Instructional Coaches

Role	Purpose	Responsibilities	Example
<b>Resource provider</b>	To expand teachers' use of a variety of resources to improve instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist teachers in locating information, materials, examples of "best practice," assessments of student learning;</li> <li>Offer and recommend resource sites;</li> <li>Update staff about current practices;</li> <li>Find alternative teaching materials for differentiation of instruction.</li> </ul>	Gathers information and resources for teachers (e.g. articles, materials).
<b>Data coach</b>	To ensure that student achievement data is used to drive decisions at the classroom and school level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify classroom, grade-level or departmental, and schoolwide trends;</li> <li>Support teachers in using data to improve instruction;</li> <li>Facilitate data conversations that analyze student learning and identify next steps.</li> </ul>	Works with individuals or groups to facilitate conversations around data-driven instructional decisions.
<b>Instructional specialist</b>	To align instruction with curriculum to meet the needs of ALL students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist teachers in the selection and implementation of appropriate instructional strategies;</li> <li>Assist teachers in the implementation of differentiation strategies;</li> <li>Work with individuals and groups of teachers.</li> </ul>	Coaches teacher on methodologies or best practices that can be used to deliver content.
<b>Curriculum specialist</b>	To ensure implementation of adopted curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize content standards;</li> <li>Deepen teachers' content knowledge;</li> <li>Assist teachers in aligning the written, taught, and tested curriculum;</li> <li>Facilitate the creation of pacing guides;</li> <li>Assist teachers with standards, essential learnings, and assessments;</li> <li>Facilitate the integration of various curriculum content areas.</li> </ul>	Helps teacher to unpack required curriculum.
<b>Classroom supporter</b>	To increase the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model effective instructional strategies;</li> <li>Co-plan or co-teach lessons;</li> <li>Observe and give feedback to teachers.</li> </ul>	Visits teacher's classroom to model, co-teach, or observe; conducts pre- and post-conferences with teacher to facilitate reflection.
<b>Learning facilitator</b>	To design collaborative, job-embedded, standards-based professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate learning opportunities for teachers;</li> <li>Design and facilitate training;</li> <li>Ensure that a variety of professional learning designs are used: study groups, lesson study, examining student work, classroom visitation.</li> </ul>	Assists with coordination and planning of effective professional learning at the school level.

Role	Purpose	Responsibilities	Example
<b>Mentor</b>	To increase the instructional skills of the novice teacher and support school-wide induction activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor new teachers or support the work of building-based teacher mentors;</li> <li>• Demonstrate lessons, co-teach, co-plan instruction;</li> <li>• Assist with “new-to-teaching” and “new-to-the-school” issues;</li> <li>• Assist with classroom management.</li> </ul>	Works with novice and induction-level teachers.
<b>School leader</b>	To work collaboratively (with formal and informal leaders) to plan, implement, and assess school change initiatives to ensure alignment and focus on intended results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate or serve on leadership teams within the school;</li> <li>• Assist with coordination of services of all coaches or resource personnel;</li> <li>• Serve as another set of eyes for principal with change initiatives;</li> <li>• Facilitate alignment among individual teacher goals and school goals.</li> </ul>	Participates as a Learning Walk team member to monitor transfer of practice from professional learning into action.
<b>Catalyst for change</b>	To create disequilibrium with the current state as an impetus to explore alternatives to current practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce alternatives or refinements;</li> <li>• Make observations about current practice;</li> <li>• Ask the hard questions about current practices;</li> <li>• Engage teachers in Evaluation Think.</li> </ul>	Challenges current practices and provides support to teachers as they make changes.
<b>Learner</b>	To model continuous learning in order to keep current, be a thought leader in the school, and model reflecting on practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model attitudes and behaviors teachers need to be successful;</li> <li>• Model applications of learning;</li> <li>• Proactively advocate for their own learning opportunities;</li> <li>• Create their own learning communities.</li> </ul>	Continually updates own professional repertoire.

# TIME ALLOCATION FOR COACHES

<b>Purpose</b>	Use this tool to examine the percentage of time coaches spend in different roles.	
<b>Recommended time</b>	1 hour	
<b>Materials</b>	• Time Allocation Chart, p. 9	
<b>Steps</b>	1. Facilitator invites coaches, coaches-in-training, or principal-coach pair to review the 10 roles listed on the Time Allocation Chart. A presenter may give an overview or use the chart included on pp. 6-7.	5 minutes
	2. Participants identify where they think coaches might spend their time if they are going to meet intended outcomes for the coaching program.	15 minutes
	3. Participants identify where coaches currently spend their time. They compare the difference between where they might spend their time and where they do spend it.	20 minutes
	4. Participants identify actions to take to get close to their ideal of where they spend time. Finally, they identify what to stop, start, and continue doing.	20 minutes

**Source:** Adapted from Killion, J., & Harrison, C. (2017). *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, Second edition. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.



## Time allocation chart

Role	Function	Time allocations				Questions/Concerns about allocation
		None	Little	Moderate	Considerable	
<b>1. Resource provider</b>	Identifying or providing teachers with information about resources or giving them actual resources they can use to improve their practices.					
<b>2. Data coach</b>	Supporting teachers in various ways, including facilitation of data conversations, so they can use data to improve their instruction.					
<b>3. Instructional specialist</b>	Helping teachers with selection, design, and implementation of appropriate instructional strategies to meet needs of all students.					
<b>4. Curriculum specialist</b>	Assisting teachers in deepening their content knowledge and aligning standards, adopted curriculum, and assessments.					
<b>5. Classroom supporter</b>	Supporting teachers to increase the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction.					
<b>6. Learning facilitator</b>	Assisting with the coordination, design, and facilitation of professional learning opportunities for all staff, ensuring that a variety of models are used.					
<b>7. Mentor</b>	Mentoring teachers who are new to the profession and assisting teachers who are new to the school.					
<b>8. School leader</b>	Serving on school leadership teams to assist with coordinating school improvement efforts.					
<b>9. Catalyst for change</b>	Encouraging teachers to analyze what is working and what is not working, challenging the status quo, and introducing new ideas.					
<b>10. Learner</b>	Modeling continuous learning as adult learners.					

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# WEEKLY LESSON PLANNING TEMPLATE

This tool supports coaches when they are working in the curriculum specialist role to support teachers or teacher teams.

<b>Purpose</b>	Use this template with teachers to scaffold weekly lesson planning in any discipline.	
<b>Recommended time</b>	1 hour	
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson Planning Template, pp. 12-13</li> <li>• State and district standards</li> <li>• Curricular materials</li> </ul>	
<b>Steps</b>	1. Coach or teacher leader reviews the Lesson Planning Template with an individual teacher or teacher team and highlights the importance of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essential standards;</li> <li>Assessments;</li> <li>Teaching strategies;</li> <li>Differentiation opportunities; and</li> <li>Decisions based on student work.</li> </ol>	5 minutes
	2. The coach asks the individual teacher or teacher team members what confuses them or is unfamiliar to them.	25 minutes
	3. The coach and teachers review a weekly set of lessons and think through all of the decisions teacher(s) made and will have to make in future lessons.	25 minutes
	4. The coach offers to assist teacher team members in the future or co-teach one or more lessons with them.	5 minutes

**Source:** Adapted from Killion, J., & Harrison, C. (2017). *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, Second edition. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

## Lesson planning template

Essential learning:	Enduring understanding:
Learning target(s) with success criteria:	Essential questions:
What summative and formative assessments will we use?	

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<b>Lesson outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will students learn?</li> <li>• How will they show their understanding?</li> </ul>					
<b>Connect</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will we put today's lesson in the context of our class's ongoing work?</li> <li>• How will we explain why are we learning this?</li> </ul>					
<b>Teach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What instructional strategy will we use to teach the concept? Why did we choose this strategy?</li> <li>• How will we put the concept into a larger context?</li> <li>• How will we make my teaching memorable? (e.g. share an anecdote, metaphor, gesture, visual, excerpt, non-example)</li> <li>• What active engagement strategies will we use?</li> </ul>					
<b>Guided practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will we actively involve students in "trying on" what has just been taught?</li> <li>• How much scaffolding will students need so that after the lesson they will be able to do this without support?</li> <li>• What prompts will we use to coach students along?</li> </ul>					

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<p><b>Link</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will we close the lesson so that students are crystal clear about:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What they should remember?</li> <li>Why it's important for today and every day?</li> <li>Where they can try this independently?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>					
<p><b>Differentiated instruction or small group practice</b></p> <p>What needs have I observed that can be addressed with additional instruction or small group practice?</p>	Group (list names)	Group (list names)	Group (list names)	Group (list names)	Group (list names)
<p><b>How will I meet that need?</b></p>	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching
<p><b>Independent work</b></p> <p>Check for evidence (benchmark). What work can I give them that is sufficiently rigorous? Identify explicitly what I will check to determine what students will be able to do.</p>	Focus students: 1.  2.	Focus students: 1.  2.	Focus students: 1.  2.	Focus students: 1.  2.	Focus students: 1.  2.

**Source:** Adapted from template used at Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Denver, Colorado.

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## **TAKING THE LEAD: NEW ROLES FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL-BASED COACHES. SECOND EDITION**

*Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison*

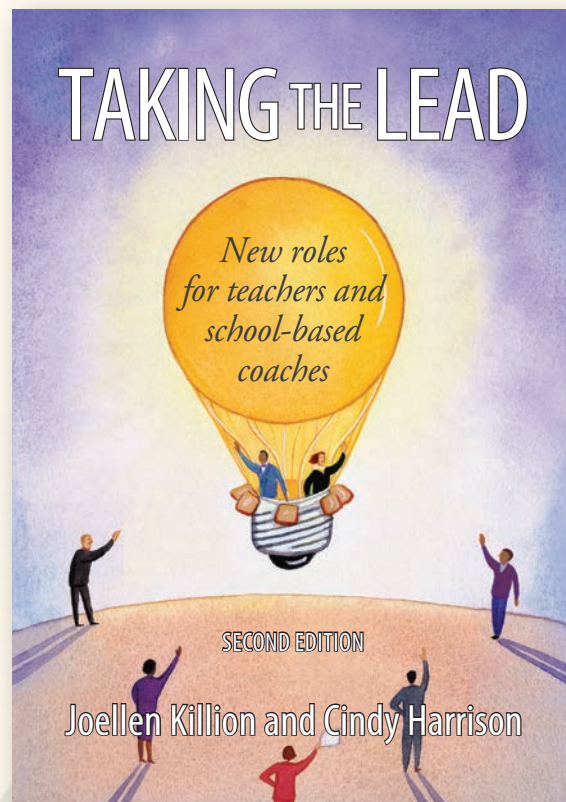
This second edition updates Learning Forward's essential text about the complex and multifaceted roles that teacher leaders and school-based coaches play as they advance student success through teaching quality.

### **Features include:**

- Updated review of the evidence on the effects of coaching;
- Deep discussions about the 10 roles of coaches;
- Real-world vignettes based on authentic experiences of coaches;
- Focus on the culture of coaching and the power of team coaching;
- Strategies for troubleshooting challenges to coaching; and
- Guidance for school- and system leaders who create the conditions supporting coaches and coaching programs.

With new content ranging from the strategic to the specific, this practical resource guides school-based coaches and leaders in the practice of student-focused coaching. System leaders may use *Taking the Lead* as they advocate the design of a coaching program focused on team, school, and district learning goals. School-based coaches and teacher leaders will find advice for coaching a reluctant colleague, drawing up an effective working agreement, reflecting on their own practice, or troubleshooting a challenge.

**B606**, 244 pages, **\$36** Members, **\$45** Nonmembers



*Taking the Lead*  
outlines 10 practical and  
powerful roles for school-  
based coaches responsible  
for helping teachers  
increase their capacity  
to serve all students.

# CREATING AN ADMINISTRATOR-COACH PARTNERSHIP

<b>Purpose</b>	Use this tool to provide a structure and tools for the partnership agreement conversations between coach and the administration.	
<b>Recommended time</b>	1 hour plus preparation	
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles of Instructional Coaches, pp. 6-7</li> <li>• Topics for Partnership Agreement List, pp. 17-18</li> </ul>	
<b>Steps</b>	1. Before the beginning of each school year, instructional coaches and administrators — including both the principal and assistant principals — meet to discuss and write an explicit agreement.	As needed
	2. Principal or facilitator explains the purposes for a partnership conversation which include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish agreements for the ongoing relationship between site administrators and instructional coaches.</li> <li>• To establish a plan for ongoing conversations to communicate and review expectations and impact for instructional coaches.</li> <li>• To align the instructional leadership work of both the administrator and the instructional coach to ensure cohesive support for teachers' professional growth.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
	3. At the beginning of the meeting, with all team members present, the principal or facilitator asks participants to draft and agree to norms for this and all future team meetings.	5 minutes
	4. Participants decide who will take notes during the meeting. The partnership agreement resulting from this conversation should be written and signed by all participants to ensure mutual understandings have been reached; therefore, it is important to take notes during the discussion, especially noting final agreements for each of the topics discussed.	5 minutes

**Source:** Adapted from Killion, J., & Harrison, C. (2017). *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, Second edition. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

<b>Steps</b>	<p>5. Participants review the 10 roles in Coaching Roles and any other district documents that define the roles of coaches. They consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What 3–5 roles do you think coaches should play to ensure the most important work at your building is successful?</li> <li>• What will the greatest challenges likely be this year?</li> <li>• What strengths and/or successes can we leverage to assist with the challenges?</li> <li>• What are our agreements around confidentiality?</li> </ul> <p><b>Hint:</b> While the purpose of this phase of the conversation is to establish shared expectations for coaching activities and priorities, it is important to remember that coaching is most productive if administration communicates expected results and the exact methodology is left to the coaches. This allows each coach to develop his or her own style of coaching and to honor teacher voice and choice within personal coaching relationships.</p>	15 minutes
	<p>6. Each participant considers the questions listed on the Topics for Partnership Agreement List. While some of the questions may be more relevant than others, a brief consideration of each question is recommended in order to ensure mutual understanding. Established school or leadership teams might wish to have each team member review the questions prior to the meeting and identify his or her key concerns for discussion.</p>	15 minutes
	<p>7. After agreement has been reached on each of the topics of concern, participants make plans to create the written agreement. Who is responsible for putting it in agreement form? When and how will all parties review it and sign?</p>	5 minutes
	<p>8. Participants review the group norms drafted at the beginning of the meeting and revise as necessary in accordance with the new agreement.</p>	5 minutes
	<p>9. Participants set a schedule for future meetings and discuss what will happen when meetings need to be canceled. Will they be rescheduled or skipped? What will happen if one or more of the team are not in attendance at a scheduled meeting? Participants decide who will send calendar appointments.</p>	5 minutes



## Topics for partnership agreement list

### What roles and responsibilities will the coaches be focusing on this year — specifically, what do we expect coaching will look like? For example:

- Are relationships already strongly built or will we allow time for relationship building before moving into coaching for impact?
- Which of the 10 roles will we prioritize for each subject or team? (Note: In establishing this priority, consider the number of new teachers on teams, the presence of new standards, or changes in curriculum.)

### How will coaches engage with teachers and where will we focus our efforts?

- How will coaches be introduced to the teachers and how will their role be explained?
- Will coaches work with teams?
- Will they engage in one-on-one formal coaching cycles?
- What teams, or how many teachers, will we attempt to coach initially?
- What are the principals' instructional priorities?
- What are the content coordinator's primary concerns?
- Is there an expectation that teachers work with coaches and, if so, how will this be communicated to teachers? Will coaches need to "sell" their services to teachers?

### When and how often will coaches have access to teachers or teacher teams?

- Which teachers have common conference periods?
- Are weekly planning meetings an expectation for teachers? And if so, is the coach's presence at those meetings required or is it at the discretion of the coach — or the teachers? Are teachers required to participate in team planning meetings? How will those expectations be communicated? Will calendar appointments be sent?
- Will planning days be given to teachers? How often? Will the dates be set by teachers or by the coach? Is the day for professional learning or planning, or both? Can a teacher refuse to attend?
- What access will coaches' have to classrooms? Should coaches wait to be invited into a teacher's classroom or is the expectation that all classrooms are open to coaches? How will this expectation be communicated to teachers?

### When and how will we exchange feedback, review progress, and timelines in order to reassess priorities?

- When will we begin to look for impact? If changes in priorities and our coaching work need to happen, when will we discuss them?
- How will we communicate changes in priorities and coaches' work to teachers?
- How are coaches expected to track or document their work? What information will be provided to administrators?
- How will coaches' work be communicated to teachers (e.g. a coaches' newsletter, a corner of the campus newsletter)?
- When we discuss progress, will we use teacher names or refer to specific teams? And if we do use names, how will we protect the integrity of the coaching relationship?

## Topics for partnership agreement list

**What are the expectations for teachers’ planning and data analysis? For each of these questions, also consider how these expectations will be communicated to teachers.**

- Are teachers expected to use the backward design process in planning?
- Are teachers expected to create common assessments in district platforms (e.g. Aware, Blackboard, Schoology) and share them with the coach?
- Are teachers expected to share data from common assessments?
- Are teachers allowed to modify common assessments at their own discretion?
- What roles do the standards, the learning objectives, and the “I can” statement play in instruction?
- Who is responsible for gathering data for teachers? For administrators?
- Will the coaches review summative and benchmark data with the teachers or will an administrator? If the results are lower than expected, who will address this result with teachers initially?

**Issues of confidentiality should specifically be addressed:**

- How should a coach let an administrator know that he or she is uncomfortable answering the question asked by the administrator because of confidentiality issues?
- How should one party let the other party know that attention is needed in a specific classroom or team as soon as possible, and how will we ensure that confidentiality is protected?

**Specific issues:**

- How will teachers’ complaints about the coach be handled?
- How and when will the team discuss the professional learning needs and schedule of coaches? What to expect in terms of days off campus vs. days on campus? Will coaches attend any off-campus professional learning with teachers?
- Is there budget money for coaches’ personal professional learning needs (e.g. conferences, service centers, coursework)?
- Is budget available to coaches for professional learning (e.g. budget for professional learning they offer; budget to pay released time so teachers can access this professional learning; budget for coaches to access district PL on the campus)?

**For coaches on two or more campuses:**

- What is the work schedule between the campuses?
- Is there any room for flexibility regarding which campus a coach is on in relation to specific teacher needs?
- On campus-level professional learning days, how will we decide how the day will be spent? What are the administrative team’s expectations?

**Adapted** from Sharron Helmke, Coordinator of Instructional Coaching, Clear Creek Independent School District.

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### BUSINESS OFFICE

504 S. Locust St.  
Oxford OH 45056  
513-523-6029  
800-727-7288  
Fax: 513-523-0638  
office@learningforward.org  
www.learningforward.org

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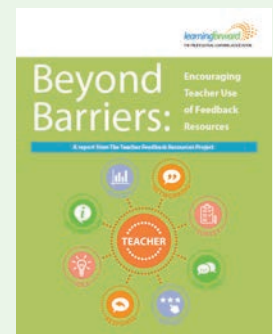
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## EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY — OR NOT

What leads teachers to use new technology products or services to improve their practice? Learning Forward recently concluded a study that investigated factors that drive teachers to embrace or challenge the use of products and services designed to support improvements in practice. Read *Beyond Barriers: Encouraging Teacher Use of Feedback Resources*, a report from the study, which was supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The report can assist education leaders and vendors to address issues of implementation and scale.



### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE STUDY

- Technology-based resources studied include those designed for video observations, peer feedback and collaboration, online professional learning, and learning management platforms.
- Though such resources offer teachers access to real-time data to support improvement, the use of such resources falls below expectations.
- There were three phases to the study, from qualitative focus groups, to a survey, to case studies.
- Three case studies are included with the report to showcase district examples of resource implementation.

Visit [www.learningforward.org/beyond-barriers](http://www.learningforward.org/beyond-barriers) to explore findings and implications.