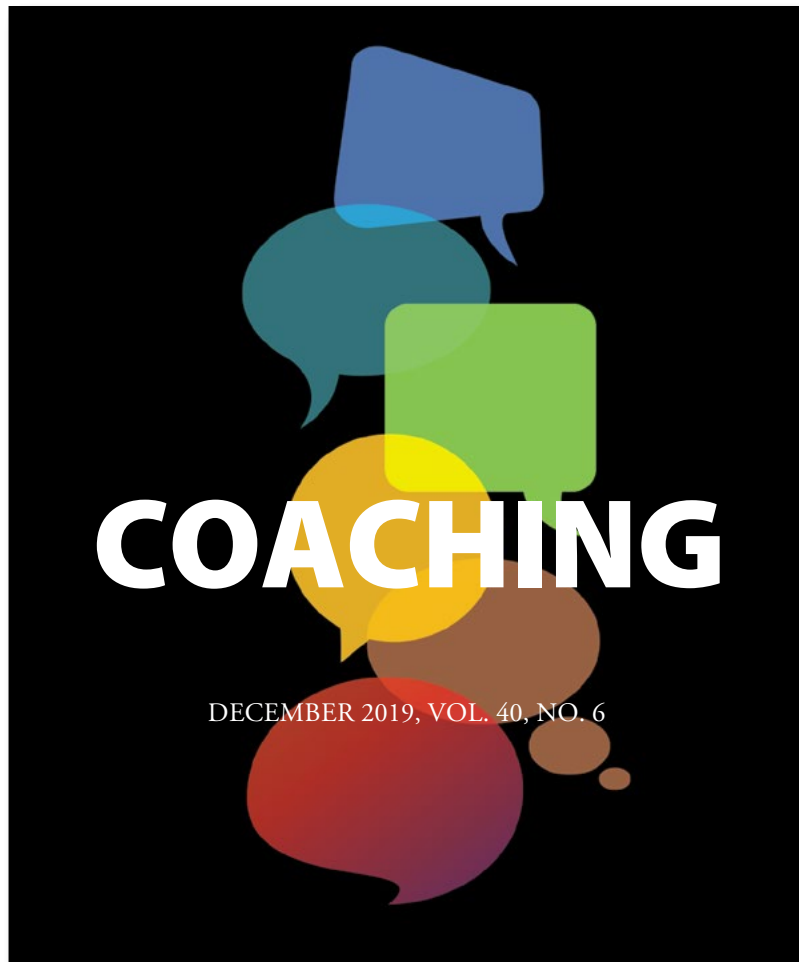


THE LEARNING PROFESSIONAL

SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDE FOR DISTRICT TEAMS



Thank you for being a district member with Learning Forward. To help you spread the learning and engagement with your colleagues, we have designed this supplemental guide exclusively for district members.

This guide will help you take your teams through a deep dive into the latest issue of *The Learning Professional*. By reading the issue and using this guide, which are focused on best practices for coaching, teams will:

- Assess the strengths and challenges of your

current coaching efforts;

- Consider and plan for video coaching; and
- Brainstorm how to use a daily coaching log for continuous improvement.

We invite you to share this guide with building leaders and members of your learning teams. Be sure to give us feedback about whether you found this useful, and if you post on social media, tag us [#LearnFwdTLP](#) [@LearningForward](#) so we can share your good work.

GET STARTED

Learn from coaching lessons

Several years ago, Fort Wayne Community Schools in Indiana made a strong commitment to high-quality professional learning for educators of all roles and levels. Coaching plays a major part in those efforts. In the article, [“The power of coaching,”](#) a district leader and two Learning Forward senior consultants describe key lessons from their long-term work with coaches in Fort Wayne. Other districts can learn from their insights as they evaluate their own progress and next steps.

ACTIONS

1. Ask participants to read [the article](#) and answer the following questions about your district’s coaching practices.
2. As a group, discuss your responses. (If you wish to do this anonymously, ask participants to hand in their sheets, calculate an average score for each question, and report them back to the group as a whole during your next gathering.) Questions to consider include:
 - In which areas did you agree or strongly agree — that is, feel you are doing well?
 - In which areas did you disagree or strongly disagree? Why?
 - Do people with different roles feel differently about these areas? Why?
 - In what areas might you focus your improvement efforts?
 - What role will coaches themselves play in driving those efforts?



1. Coaches’ roles are clearly defined.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
2. Administrators and teachers understand the role of coaches.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
3. Coaches use a consistent and clearly articulated coaching cycle process.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
4. Coaches have regular, formal opportunities to build their own skills and knowledge.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
5. Coaches are engaged in ongoing PLCs with other coaches.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
6. Coaches’ PLC meetings are aligned with district instructional goals, materials, and initiatives.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
7. Coaches have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice with peers (other than during informal, “drive-by” conversations).			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree
8. Coaches engage regularly in a process of goal setting and self-assessment.			
1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Disagree	4 Strongly disagree

NEXT STEPS

View it on video

Technology offers many valuable opportunities for coaching, including the chance for teachers to watch themselves on video and reflect on their practice. The articles [“Accentuate the positive”](#) and [“Bridging the distance”](#) describe initiatives that are finding success when coaches use this approach in the context of trusting and supportive relationships.

Recording and watching oneself on video can be daunting, but the authors write that teachers quickly overcome their discomfort when video coaching is nonevaluative and well-designed. That takes thoughtful planning that begins with clear goals and intentional relationship building.

ACTIONS

1. Ask participants to read the two articles, paying particular attention to the design of the coaching processes.
2. Facilitate a group discussion about the current or potential use of video coaching in your district.
 - a. How could or does video coaching benefit teachers and coaches in the district?
 - b. What specific school- or districtwide goals could it help you accomplish?
 - c. How would video add value above and beyond other forms of coaching?
3. If your group is enthusiastic about starting or growing video coaching, proceed to steps 4-6.
4. As a group or in pairs, examine the figures on pp. 37 and 69, which outline the process used in these two models. You may wish to recreate the steps on flip chart paper or project them on a whiteboard.
5. Discuss the common elements of these two models.
 - a. What are the key elements the models share?
 - b. How are these models similar to or different from your current coaching model?
 - c. Are there elements of these models that would be a good fit for your district? Which ones and why?
6. In pairs or small groups, complete the following planning tool for video coaching. Discuss responses with the full group and plan for follow-up steps.



What technology resources are available to us for implementing video coaching?	What technology resources do we want to explore further?	Possible action steps
What are likely to be the biggest technology challenges?	Which people or resources may be able to help us address these challenges?	Possible action steps
What are likely to be the biggest human challenges?	What strategies could we use to prevent or address them?	Possible action steps

Maximize coaches' time

Balance is a common challenge for instructional coaches. Many coaches have a full plate of responsibilities with demands both in and outside of classrooms. It can also be challenging to remain focused on specific instructional goals while being responsive to teachers' many needs and requests.

While navigating this balancing act, coaches and their supervisors benefit from a clear understanding of how they are allocating their time. In [“A dashboard view of coaching,”](#) Lauren Goldenberg, Violet Wanta, and Andrew Fletcher write that “while coaches typically share their planned schedules with supervisors and keep detailed narrative records about coaching cycles, those do not necessarily reflect a day-to-day account of their work” (p. 58).

To address this need, the authors and their colleagues in the New York City Department of Education developed an online digital daily coaching log. Using the log, coaches record how they spend their time, with whom, and on which specific instructional practices.



ACTIONS

1. Give participants time to read the article [“A dashboard view of coaching.”](#)
2. Examine the chart on p. 60. As a group, discuss: What does this example of a coach’s time allocation tell you about his or her work? How might you use this information to inform the coach’s workload or responsibilities?
3. Working in small groups or pairs, design a prototype of a coaching log that would be helpful for your district or school. You may wish to group participants according to their grade level or content area, as the log should reflect practices that are specific, relevant, and useful to coaches’ work.
 - a. Begin by brainstorming the information that would be helpful for your log.
 - b. Create a plan for when and how coaches could complete the log. For example, how long should it take to complete? Should coaches record their time throughout the day or at the end? How will you ensure that the log is useful for coaches and not just another task to complete or an undue burden?
 - c. Considering feasibility and usefulness, create a set of questions to include in the log.
4. Ask groups or pairs to swap log prototypes with another group. The groups should give feedback to one another about the usefulness and feasibility of the prototypes and discuss how to revise them.
5. Facilitate a whole-group discussion about this activity to consider:
 - a. How useful does your group think such a log would be and why?
 - b. What are the potential challenges or unintended consequences of using a log?
 - c. If your school or district were to implement a coaching log, how would you use the data?
 - d. What next steps, if any, will you take toward using a coaching log? If a log doesn’t feel like a good fit, in what other ways can you support coaches to balance their time and responsibilities to achieve school or district goals?