

Chapter 10: Teacher-coach relationships

	TOOL	PURPOSE
10.1	Sample coach rotation schedule	Review this example of a coach's use of time during a typical week.
10.2	Sample partnership agreement between coach and teacher	Use this example to create an agreement between a coach and a teacher that defines their working relationship and expectations for the coach's work.
10.3	Probing questions	Try these sample questions while conducting a partnership conversation with a teacher.
10.4	Staff survey	Collect data on the needs of teachers at a site.
10.5	Coach corner	Understand a coach's weekly schedule and work accomplished.
10.6	Feedback to coach	Collect feedback about your performance as a coach.
10.7	Protocol for problem resolution	Try this process to manage conflict clearly and productively.

TOOL 10.1**Sample coach rotation schedule**

DAY	COACHING TASKS	TEACHERS	TIME
A day prior to the implementation week	Meet with all teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff to set student and teacher learning goals, review or revise partnership agreements, and plan the coach's support work for the week.	All teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff	45 to 90 minutes
Monday	Meet with the team to provide professional development, review student data, plan subsequent meetings during the week, coordinate schedules, and identify specific student learning needs.	All teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff	45 to 90 minutes
Monday	Help teachers with lesson plans, co-teach, observe, and debrief. (Each teacher on the rotation team eventually will have two to three individual sessions with the coach.)	Teachers on the rotation team	30- to 40-minute periods
Tuesday	Help teachers with lesson plans, co-teach, observe, and debrief.	Teachers on the rotation team	30- to 40-minute periods
Wednesday	Help teachers with lesson plans, co-teach, observe, and debrief.	Teachers on the rotation team	30- to 40-minute periods
Wednesday	Meet with the team to provide professional development, review student data, plan subsequent meetings during the week, coordinate schedules, and identify specific student learning needs.	All teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff	45 to 90 minutes

TOOL 10.1 cont'd

Thursday	Help teachers with lesson plans, co-teach, observe, and debrief.	Teachers on the rotation team	30- to 40-minute periods
Thursday	Meet with the team to provide professional development, review student data, plan the team's subsequent collaborative work until the next rotation, examine student work, debrief, and set new student and teacher learning goals.	All teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff	45 to 90 minutes
Friday	Coach professional development or district meetings and/or provide additional individual coaching sessions with teachers.	Coach colleagues from other schools, district coach supervisor, principal, and/or teachers on the rotation team and related resource staff	All day

TOOL 10.2**Sample partnership agreement between instructional coach and teacher**

BASIC AGREEMENTS	DESIGN ISSUES
<p>What are your worst fears and best hopes for our work together?</p>	<p>How will we know about student achievement in your classroom? What data will we collect?</p>
<p><i>Teacher:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I am afraid that you will judge my teaching to be less than satisfactory. – I am afraid that having you in my classroom will distract the students. – I hope that our work together will make a difference for my students. – I am hoping that I will learn many new things. <p><i>Coach:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I am afraid I won't be able to help you enough to see a difference in student achievement. – I hope you will see me as a peer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We will plan an entire unit together, examine student work along the way, and evaluate the results of the final assessment. – We need to know what skills students are starting with in relation to the unit being taught.
<p>How do you want me to interact with you?</p>	<p>How and when will we co-plan and teach?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We will communicate by email. – We will each have a copy of all of our joint work. – We will be totally confidential as far as any evaluative comments we may make about each other's work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We will meet Wednesday to plan the lesson. We will each need to bring our materials with us. – We will start teaching this unit the next Monday.

TOOL 10.2 cont'd

What resources and materials will we need?	How can we implement demonstration lessons/co-teaching/visits with feedback in your classroom?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teacher will bring curriculum guide and pacing chart. – Coach will bring additional books that we could use for reading aloud during the unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We will start this unit with the coach modeling the first read-aloud lesson. Then we will co-teach during the first week. By the end of week 2, the teacher will teach a lesson incorporating a read aloud with a focus on the English language learner students.
	Where do we want to start in your classroom? What are our priorities?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Our priorities are to master using reading aloud as part of our reading mini-lessons. We also want to integrate reading into all the content areas.

Source: *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*, by Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison, Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, 2006.

TOOL 10.3**Probing questions****PROBE FOR CLARITY****Seek clear understanding**

- What exactly do you mean by later?
- Tell me about what you have in mind when you say resources?
- You indicated that you don't know. I am curious about what you think contributes to this.

PROBE FOR DETAILS**Seek more information**

- I'd like to know more about what to expect when I visit your classroom, especially related to the students we have been discussing.
- What else will be helpful in our work together?
- Let me give you a minute to add any other thoughts. (Remain silent for 30 seconds.)

ASK PRECISE QUESTIONS**Narrow the focus and drill down to help both questioner and responder seek precision***

- What caused that?
versus
- What, in your best estimate, might be some of the reasons this happened at least in this instance?
- What are the next steps?
versus
- When you think about this situation, what actions might you consider as you move forward?

* (Vervago, 2009)

Reference

Vervago. (2009). Precision Q & A Workshop Fact Sheet. Available online at www.vervago.com/PQFactSheet.pdf.

TOOL 10.4

Staff survey

Please return to the student achievement coach.

Please complete this brief survey so I can get to know you better and we can work together to meet school goals.

Your name _____

Grade level and subject _____

1. What do you feel is your area of teaching expertise?

2. What are your strengths in your job? (You may include any strength, such as parent relationships/class management/rapport with students/knowledge of subject area, etc.)

3. What interests and skills do you have outside of the classroom that you might like to share?

4. Do you have any of the following that you would be willing to share with other staff members?
(Please describe briefly.)
 - Units

 - Strategies

 - Lessons

 - Best practice ideas

 - Other _____

TOOL 10.4 cont'd

5. What area do you feel you could use support in this year?

6. How do you see the role(s) of the student achievement coach as it pertains to you?
(Please explain briefly.)
 - Mentor

 - Resource

 - Co-teacher

 - Coach

7. Please list any immediate needs with which the student achievement coach could help you.

8. What resources do you foresee needing from your student achievement coach over the next few months?

9. Do you have any burning questions about the student achievement coach's role or how this role could benefit you?

10. Would you be open to allowing other teachers to observe you teach in your classroom?

Yes

No

Source: Connie Wardwell, student achievement coach, Adams 12 Five Star Schools (Thornton, CO).

TOOL 10.5**Coach corner****Summary of our coach's work this week****October 2, 2011**

- 3 hours Worked with team of 7th-grade language arts teachers on how to teach ways to write a persuasive essay. Designed two weeks of lessons and referenced district's "literacy best practices." We also spent time clarifying what was meant by revision strategies and peer feedback so the entire team would use the same strategies while teaching these lessons.
- 2 hours Designed a lesson study on slope with the 6th-grade math team.
- 1 hour Worked with individual teachers on small-group management.

October 3, 2011

- 4 hours Conducted two rotations of modified lesson study that included a) planning instruction, b) observation of teaching, and c) revision of instruction with the 6th-grade math team. We began with 21% proficiency (based on last year's CSAP results) and ended with 87% proficiency.
- 2 hours Prepared for staff workshop by observing teachers in the building and their use of differentiation strategies.

October 4, 2011

- 2 hours Coordinated team meeting.
- 2 hours Had core conversation with 8th-grade teachers on ways to integrate writing instruction for all students into all content areas. We discussed and agreed on a variety of ways to accomplish this. Other teachers can contact Kerry for specifics if they are interested.
- 2 hours In two classrooms, co-taught lessons integrating English language learner strategies.

TOOL 10.6

Feedback to coach

January 2012

I wanted to ask all the teachers for feedback on what I, your instructional coach, have been doing this year. The purpose of this feedback is to help me meet your needs for support as you strive for success with all students. Please be honest, as this will help me get better at my job. Thanks in advance.

Please return this to me by **Feb. 1**.

1. What services has the coach provided to you this year? How have you interacted with the coach?
2. What effect has the coach had on your instructional practice?
3. What effect has the coach had on your work that you feel has improved student achievement in your class?
4. What advice would you give the instructional coach to help her be more effective?
5. In what ways has the coach worked effectively with you?

TOOL 10.7**Protocol for problem resolution**

Instructional coaches work with teachers and principals in partnership to have a positive impact on student learning. Working collaboratively fosters relationships among adults in a new way. Just as new personal relationships require excellent communication and problem solving skills, so do new school relationships.

Principles underlying these protocols

- It is always best to talk to the person directly involved in the situation rather than other people when trying to resolve a problem. Those involved in the situation can best solve the problem, not those outside of the issue.
- Always find an appropriate time to bring up the issue. Do not address the issue in front of others or at an inopportune time. Ask when the other person has some time to talk with you.
- Address the issue as soon as possible rather than letting the issue fester.
- When problems are defined well, resolutions are easier to find.

Define the problem	
The following steps may help you define the problem more clearly before you have a discussion.	
1.	Ask yourself what you see as the problem. Define it for yourself.
2.	Assume positive intentions for the other person.
3.	Consider factors (who, what, when) that are contributing to the issues. Consider your role in the problem. Identify positive aspects of the relationship and think about how to build on the positive.
4.	Identify what is within your control and the other person's control. If neither of you have any control over the issue, the issue may best be resolved elsewhere.
5.	Identify and consider other perspectives.
6.	Redefine your problem until you feel you are very clear.
7.	Be ready to suggest multiple ways to resolve the issue.

TOOL 10.7 cont'd

Protocol for problem resolution between COACH and TEACHER	
1.	Define the problem for yourself. (See box for steps.)
2.	Go directly to the person involved and discuss the issue. Try to resolve the problem at this level. Try this more than once as changing a behavior sometimes takes time.
3.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, seek help. Ask a peer or someone who has effective facilitation skills to facilitate the conversation between you and the other person.
4.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking the person you report to for help. This could include using an outside facilitator — the principal or the coaching coordinator — to resolve the issue.
5..	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking for help from an outside mediator through the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement or the Employee Assistance Program.
6.	If you still are unable to resolve the issue, consider asking your association for help.
Protocol for problem resolution between COACH and PRINCIPAL	
1.	Define the problem for yourself. (See box for steps.)
2.	Go directly to the person involved and discuss the issue. Try to resolve the problem at this level. Try this more than once as changing a behavior sometimes takes time.
3.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, seek help. You may consider asking your coaching coordinator to facilitate a problem-solving conversation.
4.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement executive director to facilitate a problem-solving conversation.
5.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking Department of Learning and Educational Achievement for an outside mediator's help.
6.	If you still are unable to resolve the issue, consider asking your association for help.
Protocol for problem resolution between COACH and PRINCIPAL	
1.	Define the problem for yourself. (See box for steps.)

TOOL 10.7 cont'd

2.	Go directly to the person involved and discuss the issue. Try to resolve the problem at this level. Try this more than once as changing a behavior sometimes takes time.
3.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, seek help. You may consider asking your coaching coordinator to facilitate a problem-solving conversation.
4.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement executive director to facilitate a problem-solving conversation.
5.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement for an outside mediator's help.
6.	If you still are unable to resolve the issue, consider asking your association for help
Protocol for problem resolution between COACH and COACHING COORDINATOR	
1.	Define the problem for yourself. (See box for steps.)
2.	Go directly to the person involved and discuss the issue. Try to resolve the problem at this level. Try this more than once as changing a particular behavior sometimes takes time.
3.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, seek help. You may consider asking the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement executive director to facilitate a problem-solving conversation.
4.	If you are unable to resolve the issue at that level, you may consider asking the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement or Employee Assistance Program for an outside mediator's help.
5.	If you still are unable to resolve the issue, consider asking your association for help.
Protocol for problem resolution between COACH and COMMUNITY SUPERINTENDENT	
1.	Community superintendent would go directly to the coaching coordinator from an inquiry and problem-solving stance to identify next steps.
2.	If unable to resolve the issue at that level, consider asking for the Department of Learning and Educational Achievement executive director's help in problem solving.

Source: Adapted from the Jeffco (Jefferson County, CO) Public Schools.