

Conversations with Coaches

This document has been created to assist with understanding the effectiveness of your Instructional Coach Program. In the current environment there is a desire not to overburden school based staff, but the need remains to look at programs and strategies to determine whether or not they are working. The questions below were designed to help you easily reflect on your program, dig deeper and obtain additional information on the work of the coaches including their perceptions, how data are used to make decisions, how the program is connected to the school improvement process and the effects, or outcomes of the coaching model.

This document provides five guiding or overarching questions. Below each guiding question, are two types of probing questions; Quick Response which can be used as a poll during a meeting, and Short Response that can be used individually as exit tickets (e.g., let's talk about this question, or before we close, please respond in the chat box to this question). The set of questions include ranking, multiple choice and open ended. Some questions will ask for facts about implementation and others will ask for opinions. You may also identify other probing questions that may be more helpful in your specific context.

Sample introduction to coaches.

The following survey items will ask you questions about the coaching model in your school. You will be asked about

- your work as a coach,
- your perceptions of your role,
- how you use data to make decisions,
- connections to the school improvement process, and
- effects or outcome of your coaching model.

Responses will remain confidential and will help gain an understanding of how the coaching model is being implemented. Please feel free to be as open and honest in answering questions as you are comfortable. Again, your anonymity is ensured so provide as much information as you feel comfortable doing. Some questions will ask for facts about implementation and others will ask for perceptions.

Guiding Question 1: In what ways do coaches support teachers as a means of improving student learning and teacher practices?

Quick Response

1. Are you participating in in person or virtual coaching sessions? If so, how frequently (daily, weekly, monthly)
2. Of the three models of coaching, as identified in the district K-12 reading plans submitted to the Florida Department of Education, which are you using?
3. Is your role as a coach clearly defined? (On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least defined)
4. Is the coaching model being implemented with integrity? (On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being little integrity)
5. How many hours this week have you spent with teachers? With teams? Are you able to spend at least 50% of your time working directly with teachers?

6. What other tasks are expected of you? (Lunch duty, testing, working directly with students, etc.)
7. Are you expected to be an expert or a partner to teachers?
8. How would you rate the communication from your supervisor on your role as a coach? (On a scale of 1 to 5; (1 being not effective to 5 being most effective)
9. How often do you work with teachers on aligning materials to instructional purpose, ability of students? How? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
10. How often do you work with teachers on communicating with parents and families? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
11. How often do you coach “on the fly” (e.g. hallway or resource room chat)? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
12. How often do you develop, locate, or share resources with teachers? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
13. Are you expected to develop curriculum and/or prepare materials?
14. How often do you model instructional strategies, using data, working with students? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
15. How often do you co-plan with teachers? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
16. How often do you co-teach with teachers? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
17. How often do you observe in the classroom? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
18. How often do you lead cycles of coaching (including, pre-conferencing, observing or co-teaching, post-conferencing) (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
19. Of the three models of coaching identified in the district K-12 reading plans submitted to the Florida Department of Education, which are you using? (Sweeny, Knight, Other, Unknown)
20. What grade levels does your coaching model target? (K-2, 3-5, Other)

Short Response

1. What grade levels does your coaching model target? Why?
2. If you are doing virtual coaching, can you provide a description of how you coach virtually?
3. Do you feel that virtual coaching is effective? Why, or why not?
4. Describe your daily schedule.
5. What are the key ways in which you work with teachers (help them establish goals, etc.)?
6. How do you divide your time in terms of supporting teachers and assuming other tasks (e.g., working with students, assessment, etc.)?
7. What is the content focus of your work and how was the decision made to focus on that content?
8. Define your role as a coach.
9. How will you determine if what you are doing is working?
10. What outcome measures, including observation instruments, achievement tests and self-report surveys are you using to track/record services and/or track success?
11. Has your supervisor given a clear account of expectations of the coaching program? Specific tasks, personnel to work with?
12. How does your administrator communicate with you about your role as a coach?
13. Who determines the focus of coaching (principal, coach, district administrator)? Has the focus been clearly communicated?

14. Are coaches used consistently across schools. Are schools doing what they said they were going to do?
15. How will you/have you address(ed) any necessary changes to the instruction/curriculum?
16. What is the length, frequency, total amount of time spent in coaching sessions? Of complementary PD Elements? Below are a few questions about professional learning activities.
 - a. What, if any professional learning activities have been provided to you?
 - b. Is there a network of coaches who work together as a means of PL?
 - c. How effective are these professional learning experiences?
17. What support have you received from leadership (principal, district) and how helpful is this support?
18. Are there clear explanations of the type of PD available to you, teachers, and schools?
19. Is there an agreed upon and understood model of coaching in your schools/district? If yes, what is it? If not, what are some of the difficulties or challenges that limit this understanding?
20. Is there currently a program evaluation plan? If yes, what are the goals or purposes for the evaluation? (i.e., how will you use the evaluation results?)
21. Who makes the decision about the focus of your coaching? (e.g., coaches, school administrator, district)
22. What are you expected to be doing? Are they "productive" activities?
23. How often do you work with the teacher on actively encouraging independence, creativity, and critical thinking? How? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)

Guiding Question 2: What do coaches view, or perceive, as important aspects of their position?

Quick Response

1. To what extent do you see your role as an "expert" or as a partner?
2. How is the "focus" of your work determined (e.g., who makes the decision about the focus)?
3. To what extent do you think your coaching influences teacher knowledge? (On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least effective)
4. To what extent do you think your coaching influences teacher instruction? (On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least effective)
5. How often do you work with teachers on understanding the learner's background and/or prior knowledge? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?
6. How often do you work with teachers on creating rapport with students and establishing an inviting classroom? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?

Short Response

7. How will you know when the coaching has been successful, and you can move on?
8. Describe how your coaching has influenced teacher knowledge.
9. Describe how your coaching has influenced teacher instruction.

10. What experience, skills do you bring to the table. (e.g., teaching, and coaching experience, subject expertise, role in school or district). How can these affect your ability to work with teachers?
11. In a perfect world, what is your daily schedule?
12. In a perfect world, how would you make decisions on who you work with?
13. How will you/have you address(ed) any necessary changes to the instruction/curriculum?
14. How will you know when the coaching has been successful and you can move on?
15. How are you as a coach affecting the data/instruction?
16. What are your beliefs about how coaching should influence/support teaching and learning?
17. What are your thoughts about the content focus of coaching? Is this an important focus that can make a difference in student learning?
18. What is the focus of the coaching model? (e.g., what teachers do, how teachers think about their practices? Collaboration?)
19. To what extent do you see your role as an “expert” or as a partner?
20. How will you, as a coach, change the data. That is, what adaptations will you make in the data you use to inform instruction and coaching?

Guiding Question 3: How do you use data to make decisions about who (which teachers) and how (the model) to coach, and the essential content for improving instruction?

Quick Response

1. How is the “focus” of your work determined (e.g., who makes the decision about the focus)?
2. What progress monitoring data are you using?
3. How often do you work with teachers on modifying materials and instruction to accommodate all students? (based on the data) (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?
4. How often do you work with teachers on selection/creation of assessments in a variety of formats to align with goals? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?
5. How often do you work with teachers on using assessment data to identify student growth and/or areas of opportunities? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?
6. How often do you work with teachers on using assessment data to inform instruction? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never) How?

Short Response

1. How are you as a coach affecting the data/instruction?
2. Provide examples of how, in the past week/month you have worked with teachers on specific strategies to meet the needs of all learners?
3. What progress monitoring data will you review throughout the year? How often? How will you ensure that you are getting the information you need?
4. In what ways will you share the data results with teachers? Administrators? i
5. What data (student, teacher) are used to make decisions about your coaching practices? How are those data used?
6. In what ways does data help you make decisions about who and how you coach?
7. What data, based on your SIP, informed the coaching model?
8. How are you as a coach affecting the data/instruction?

9. What information was used to identify teachers for the program? (Teacher request, admin assignment, data etc.).
10. What evaluation data (qualitative and quantitative) are you collecting and how useful is the information? (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, student attendance, test data)
11. To what extent do you feel your work as a coach influences student performance? What data are you using to make this determination?

Guiding Question 4: Is the coach and coaching an integral part of your school improvement plan?

Quick Response

1. Are you a member of the school improvement team?
2. Were you included in the creation of the SIP and/or Title I Plan?
3. If so (or if known), what SIP and/or Title I Plan goal/s is/are the focus of the coaching model?
4. What is the outcome you are addressing?
5. How often do you work with teachers on establishing goals that align with the standards? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
6. How often do you work with teachers on selection/creation of assessments in a variety of formats to align with goals? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
7. How often do you work with teachers on modifying materials and instruction to accommodate all students? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)

Short Response

8. Were you included in the creation of the SIP or Title I Plan? If so how, what role did you play? If not, why not?
9. If so (or if known) what data informed the coaching model based on your SIP?
10. In what ways has the SIP been shared with teachers and community? To what extent do you believe recipients understand and use the SIP?
11. Describe how you work with teachers on establishing goals that align with the standards.
12. Describe how you work with teachers on selection/creation of assessments in a variety of formats to align with goals.
13. Describe how you work with teachers on modifying materials and instruction to accommodate all students.

Guiding Question 5: What effects/outcomes seem to be a result of the coaching program?

Quick Response

1. Who is the intended audience of the coaching? (What group do you expect to see outcomes from?) (Students, Teachers, Parents, Lower Quartile, Etc.)
2. To what extent do you think your coaching affects teacher knowledge? (On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being most effective)
3. To what extent do you think your coaching affects teacher instruction? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

4. To what extent do you believe coaching has affected student performance? (On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being most effective)
5. How often do you work with teachers on establishing goals that align with the standards? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
6. How often do you work with teachers on selection/creation of assessments in a variety of formats to align with goals? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)
7. How often do you work with teachers on actively encouraging students' independence, creativity, and critical thinking? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Never)

Short Response

1. Who is the intended audience of the coaching? (What group do you expect to see outcomes from?) (Students, Teachers, Parents, Lower Quartile, Etc.) What data did you use to come to that decision?
2. How will you know when the coaching has been successful, and you can move on?
3. To what extent do you believe your work as a coach influences student performance? What data are you using to make this determination? (E.g., student engagement, test scores, grouping)
4. How are you monitoring the integrity of the coaching mode; what do you expect to see?
5. How are you monitoring the accuracy of the content focus of the coaching?
6. What tools are you using to assure that evidence-based practices from the professional development are being implemented in the classroom. (Lookfors, walk throughs, observation tools)
7. To what extent do you think your coaching influences teacher knowledge? Teacher beliefs about teaching and learning? Provide several examples.
8. To what extent do you think your coaching influences teacher instruction? Teacher beliefs about teaching and learning? Provide several examples.
9. Overall, what effect/outcomes have you seen from the Coaching Program?
10. What outcome measures including observation instruments, achievement tests and self-report surveys are you using to track/record services and/or track success?