

Ohio's Model for Peer Coaching FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



Ohio's Model for Peer Coaching for Professional Learning is designed for districts participating in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP): Early Literacy Pilot and/or State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) that also are taking part in evidence-based language and literacy professional learning and do not have full-time literacy coach available. The Ohio Department of Education may update this handbook periodically based on feedback from peer coaching participants and experts in the field.

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Section 1: Definition

Peer coaching defined:

- “Peer coaching is a time for teachers to take risks, to try out new ideas and approaches, and to discuss the results with trusted colleagues. Peer coaching is not supervision or evaluation of teachers, nor should peer coaches be expected to improve the overall performance of ineffective teachers” (Sedita, n.d.).
- Peer coaching offers a supportive, collaborative framework for teachers to bring professional learning to life in their classrooms.
- Peer coaching is a confidential process through which two or more professional colleagues work together to reflect on current practices; expand, refine, and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; or solve problems in the workplace (Robbins, 1991).
- For this work, peer coaching will focus on the classroom implementation of evidence-based literacy practices.

“The most valuable resource that all educators have is each other. Without collaboration our growth is limited to our own perspectives.”

(Meehan, 2011)

Ohio’s Instructional and Systems Peer Coaching Model

Instructional	Systems
Peer Coaching in the Classroom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations • Modeling • Co-teaching • Follow-up conversations Video as a peer coaching tool.	Ohio Improvement Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer coaching in teacher-based teams • Peer coaching in building leadership teams <i>Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory and administration.</i> Leadership coaching.

BETTER CONVERSATIONS

(Beliefs)

(Knight, 2016)

- I see conversation partners as equals.
- I want to hear what others have to say.
- I believe people should have a lot of autonomy.
- I don't judge others.
- Conversation should be back and forth.
- Conversation should be life-giving.

Peer Coaching Examples

Collaborative	Formal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Teacher-based teams ◦ Article and book studies ◦ Conversations about student work ◦ Video analysis and discussion ◦ Intervention planning meetings (pre-referral, IAT RTI) ◦ Instructional rounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Coaching Cycles (Impact Cycle and Plan to Debrief) ◦ Co-teaching ◦ Co-planning ◦ Modeling teaching practices

Section 2: Purpose and Rationale

Why Use Peer Coaching

Peer coaching is extension of professional learning:

- Coaching is important. Everyone needs a coach, and every educator has the capacity to become a coach;
- Research supports the use of peer coaching as a powerful strategy for building teacher capacity (Kraft, Blazer, & Hogan, 2016);
- According to Showers and Joyce (1996), “peer coaching is a mechanism to increase classroom implementation of training”;
- The sustainability and scalability of Ohio’s State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP): Early Literacy Pilot coaching model, which calls for one dedicated literacy coach per building, may not be workable in every district. Peer coaching is a more sustainable model for bridging the gap between professional learning and teacher practice;
- According to Harbour and Allison (2009), “the objective of peer coaching is to improve the quality of teaching by developing and sharing good practice. It is a collaborative process”;
- The goal of [peer] coaching is to improve teaching practice, by increasing the use of practices shown to be highly effective, including evidence-based practices (NCSI, 2014);
- Peer coaching can increase implementation of practices learned through professional learning:
 - The range of outcomes for coaching are those of the professional learning program overall. Coaching does not have its own outcomes. The hope for coaching is that it will increase substantially the odds for improved practice. After all, coaching gives assistance to help professional learning participants — whether individuals or groups — actually do what they only learn about during instruction from a teacher (Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, 2018).

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

(Sheehy & Ceballos, 2018)

Section 3: Determining Readiness (Implementation Science Stage: Exploration)

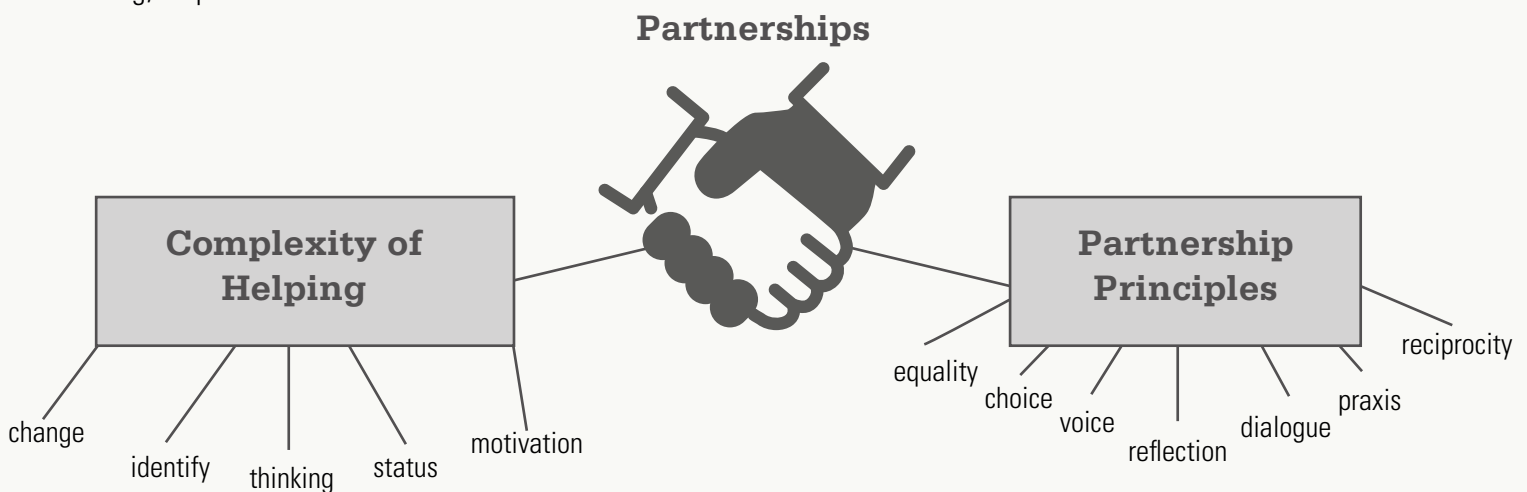
“In education, effective professional learning must be grounded in an understanding of how complex helping relationships can be. Failing to understand the nature of helping relationships can doom leaders of change.”

(Knight, 2011c)

The team structures at the core of the Ohio Improvement Process form peer networks, giving more people a voice and allowing for multiple perspectives in guiding each district’s journey toward organizational learning and continuous improvement (Ohio Department of Education, n.d.)

- Do you have collaborative implementation teams?
- Do teacher-based teams mirror the student population and include:
 - o General education teachers;
 - o Intervention specialists;
 - o Related service specialists (if needed);
 - o Teachers that specialize in working with students learning English (if needed);
 - o Staff that provide supplementary reading instruction, such as title program teachers, tutors and reading specialists; Professional Learning Peer-to-Peer Coaching (listening, prompting, questioning, modeling, reflecting, feedback) Traditional Professional Development (such as Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS))
 - o The principal or a meeting facilitator.

This graphic, originally created by Jim Knight in his book, *Unmistakable Impact*, demonstrates the complexity of any coaching relationship. Coaching, especially peer coaching, is a partnership. In any partnership reciprocity, praxis, and dialogue are critical, always stressing that both partners are equal. Coaching is also about establishing a helping relationship, where both partners contribute to motivate one another, and engage in critical thinking and dialogue. In coaching, no partner has a role above the other.



Consider Team Roles and Responsibilities

Shared Leadership

Effective leaders believe teams should share decision-making responsibility, empowering all staff to contribute to purposeful choices and resource management. Continuous improvement is everyone’s responsibility. Different situations call for different leadership skills.

Communication and Engagement

Effective teams require actively engaged members who communicate consistently with all staff and stakeholders. These teams must engage in two-way communication to collect and share the information and data they need to implement evidence-based strategies. This feedback loop helps teams communicate their support needs, barriers to implementation and successes.

Consider Team Roles and Responsibilities (continued)

Purposeful Decision-Making

Informed decision-making and resource management calls for analyzing adult and student data. Teams at all levels collect, monitor and analyze the data through this continuous process to monitor their improvement goals.

Resource Management

Teams direct resources to support district and school goals. These resources include people, program materials, time and funds. All teams should evaluate and align resources to district and building-level plans to provide professional learning, including coaching, selecting and onboarding staff.

Section 4: Criteria for Laying the Groundwork (Implementation Science Stage: Installation)

Criteria for Laying the Groundwork for Effective Peer Coaching

(Adapted from Easton, 2015)

- Peer coaching should align with professional learning and the school's professional development plan (Neumerski, 2012).
 - Coaching, in other words, though closest in action to the practices the professional learning aims to change, must take a more indirect approach than the rest of the professional learning of which it's a part. In the "training events" that constitute didactic [teacher-led] group instruction, the training *tells* participants about the right work: including that they should do more of it right now. Coaching, based on trust and established communication protocols, shows them — or better still, *prompts them to discover* — how to do steadily more of it (Neumerski, 2012; OLAC, 2018).
- The building and district administration should have a clear picture of the peer coaching model and promote a collaborative culture in the building.
- Administrators need to understand the role peer coaching plays in increasing the collaborative culture.
- Staff in the building view teaching as a continuous improvement process.
- Faculty and staff recognize the need for improvement and formal ongoing learning.
- The school's climate supports innovation and change.
- For the most part, staff members are supportive and positive with one another. Participants have trusting relationships with one another (Knight, 2016).
- Clear expectations for engagement in peer coaching are developed.
- Assessment methods for measuring the difference and outcomes for peer coaching are developed.
- Staff respect confidentiality of other staff.
- The district or school (leadership) commits to peer coaching by providing time (including release time for peer coaching), money and symbolic support.
- Participants share a common language about curricula and teaching practices.
- Participants are trained in peer coaching skills
- Participants select the partner(s) with whom they will work.
- The person being observed determines which teaching practice his or her peers will observe.
- Peer coaching procedures are negotiated by district and building personnel in detail, so partners trust their agreements.
- Feedback is based on specific, objective data.
- The practices and consequences of peer coaching are examined by building leadership teams as thoughtfully as the practices and consequences of teaching.
- Every teacher in the building sets professional improvement goals based on the *LETRS Application of the Concepts Tool* (Voyager Sopris Learning, 2018). Goals will change with each cycle. As soon as teachers master the goals, they will change.
- Presume positive intent.

"Coaches help take all the ideas and practices they are learning and bring them to life. Without coaching, too often, no significant change occurs."

(Knight, 2011c)

BETTER CONVERSATIONS

(Habits)

(Knight, 2016)

Demonstrate empathy

Listen with empathy

Foster dialogue

Ask better questions

Make emotional connections

Be a witness to the good

Find common ground

Control toxic emotions

Redirect toxic emotions

Build trust

A Winning Combination: Professional Development + Coaching (OLAC, 2018)



Section 5: Finding Time (Implementation Science Stage: Partial Implementation)

These are suggestions to help schools find time for peer coaching.

Not all options will meet the needs of a building. Use these suggestions to develop plans that fit your needs (Easton, 2015):

- Peer coaching occurs in teacher-based team meetings. The peer coach offers suggestions for instructional strategies aligned with the data or asks reflective questions to spur conversations about data analysis. The Ohio Improvement Process roles can vary, including that of the meeting facilitator;
- The district hires a roving substitute to move from class to class, releasing teachers to work together;
- Teachers form groups of three. One teacher takes another's class, releasing that teacher to work with the third member of the group;
- Counselors, resource teachers, librarians, nurses or other specialists take classes to release teachers to coach;
- Title teachers and intervention specialists push into general education classrooms to serve as models for instructional strategies or to observe the instructional strategies of the general education teachers;
- Teachers have the opportunity to observe others during their planning time;
- Instructional Rounds - Groups of teachers observe teachers in classrooms as they present their lessons. They can debrief after observing to reflect on what they learned. These groups may include a principal.

“Clearly, participating in a coaching relationship takes time! And because of that, it’s critical that coaching uses time well.”

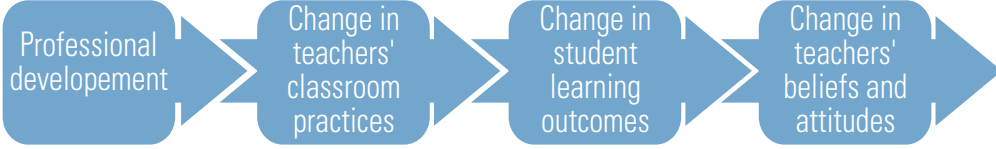
(Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, 2018)

Why are there options?

According to Jim Knight (2018), “The solution is to create structures that provide focus for human experience while respecting the autonomy of each individual.” Complete freedom of choice, without structure, form, is not the solution we want; it is chaos. However, “form without choice is oppressive.”

Section 6: Logistical Considerations in Peer Coaching - Barriers and Possible Solutions

Criteria for Laying the Groundwork for Effective Peer Coaching

Barriers and Considerations	Solutions
Teachers do not have coaching experience.	Roles of peer coaches are clearly defined, and suggestions are provided for implementation in this handbook, and the face to face training. Technical assistance is available through the Ohio Department of Education to begin implementing peer coaching.
Teachers do not have time to coach in addition to their classroom responsibilities.	Coaching is part of the school culture, is job-embedded professional learning, and is part of daily practice. See Section 5: Finding time, for more information.
Teachers lack motivation to get involved.	Collective Teacher Efficacy is John Hattie’s number one strategy for increasing student achievement, with an effect size of 1.57 (Donohoo, Hattie, & Eells, 2018). Peer coaching improves collective teacher efficacy by engaging all teachers.
There is tension among teachers about who is coaching and who is receiving coaching.	All teachers are peer coaches and all teachers will take part in the coaching cycle.
Lack of administrative support.	Administrators need to see the value of peer coaching to build teacher capacity and guarantee more thorough implementation. Professional development without coaching is not effective, in educators don’t implement what they learn. The peer coaching model first discussed by Showers and Joyce (1996) offers a cost-effective solution for coaching and is a critical to ensuring proper implementation of learned practices.
Peer coaching is rigid and lacks flexibility.	The peer coaching model is adaptable to the context of the school. See Section 5: Finding Time, for more information and suggestions. See Section 1: Definition, for more suggestions on how schools can implement peer coaching.
Peer coaching is used on a short-term basis.	Peer coaching should become part of the building culture.
Lack of knowledge of evidence-based literacy practices by all teachers in the building.	Establish a base of literacy knowledge with selected staff members.
Insufficient self-awareness, unrealistic expectations and insufficient motivation.	<p>Self-awareness – A model of teacher change (Guskey, 1985, 1986, 1989)</p>  <pre> graph LR A[Professional development] --> B[Change in teachers' classroom practices] B --> C[Change in student learning outcomes] C --> D[Change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes] </pre> <p>Unrealistic Expectations – Change does not happen overnight, it is a process that involves planning and occurs in stages. This model is set up to align with the implementation stages.</p> <p>Motivation – Establish autonomy (choices), mastery (opportunities for staff to learn new material), and purpose (why coaching is being implemented) to build staff motivation for the practice (Pink, 2009).</p>

Section 7: Implementing Collaborative Peer Coaching (Implementation Science Stage: Partial Implementation)

Peer Coaching Resources

Collaborative	Formal
Teacher-based teams Article and book studies Conversations about student work Video analysis and discussion Intervention planning meetings (pre-referral, Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) and/or Response to Intervention (RtI) Instructional rounds	Impact Cycle and Plan to Debrief coaching cycles (addressed during Peer to Peer Coaching Training) Co-teaching Co-planning Modeling teaching practices

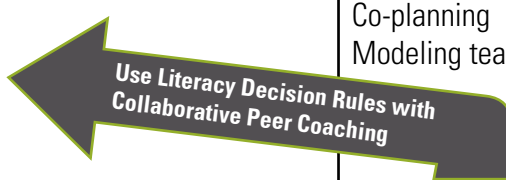
Collaborative

- Teacher-based teams (Using the Ohio Improvement 5-Step Process):
 - Analysis of student work, not just the data (Steps 1 and 3);
 - Implementation of evidence-based practices learned through literacy professional development (Step 2);
 - Co-planning of lessons based on data analysis, including evidence-based practices (Step 3);
 - Everyone teaches the lesson and comes together to reflect on implementation and outcomes (Steps 4 and 5).
- Book and article studies:
 - Begin with articles, as they may be easier to discuss;
 - Article suggestions to complement LETRS Units:
 - Teaching Reading is Rocket Science by Louisa Moats (LETRS Unit 1);
 - Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide – Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade (LETRS Units 2 & 3);
 - Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers (LETRS Unit 8);
 - 4 Components of an Effective Vocabulary Lesson (LETRS Unit 5);
 - The Usefulness of Brief Instruction on Reading Instruction Strategies by Daniel Willingham (LETRS Units 6 & 7).
- Video Analysis:
 - Begin with analysis of third-party instructional videos (for example, YouTube, LETRS videos):
 - Anita Archer Vocabulary Instructional Routine Videos (LETRS Unit 5);
 - Heggerty Videos from YouTube:
 - Kindergarten;
 - 1st Grade;
 - 2nd Grade.
 - Then, move to looking at videos of teachers in the building;
 - Reflective Conversation Protocols:
 - Watch Yourself/Teacher Form for reflection (Jim Knight);
 - Watch the Students Form for reflection (Jim Knight);
 - Reflective Conversation Starters:
 - What is the learning target for the lesson?
 - What's the learning activity to teach the target?
 - What is the teacher doing?
 - What are the students doing?
 - If you were going to teach this lesson next week, what changes would you make?

- Pre-Referral/IAT/RTI Meetings:
 - Determine what informal diagnostic assessments to give based on preliminary data (screener);
 - Analyze student work, not just the data;
 - Co-plan interventions based on the decision rules for the assessment data;
 - Guidance for creation of decision rules will be addressed during training sessions with Peer Coaching facilitators
 - Gather post intervention data for progress monitoring;
 - Reflect on the impact of the interventions on student performance;
 - Suggest adjustments to the interventions – including time, intensity, delivery and type.

Using the Decision Rules

Collaborative	Formal
Teacher-based teams Article and book studies Conversations about student work Video analysis and discussion Intervention planning meetings (pre-referral, IAT RTI) Instructional rounds	Impact Cycle and Plan to Debrief coaching cycles (addressed during Peer to Peer Coaching Training) Co-teaching Co-planning Modeling teaching practices



The decision rules, with strategies, can be used in collaborative coaching conversations, such as in teacher-based team conversations about student work and intervention planning meetings:

- Look at student data and student work samples (DIBELS/Acadience or AIMSWEB or other Universal Screening measure);
- Determine if the student is at benchmark or below benchmark, based on assessment cut scores;
- Follow the steps to gather additional data, if necessary, through informal diagnostic assessments;
- Review the data in coaching conversations;
- Determine appropriate instructional strategies for implementation.

“Skillful coaches use a variety of subtle communication strategies to create equality between themselves and their collaborating teachers.”

(Knight, 2011c)

Section 8: Implementing Formal Peer Coaching (Implementation Science Stage: Partial Implementation)

Simple plans, with clear goals, make it easier for everyone in a school to work together to dramatically improve teaching.

(Knight, 2011c)

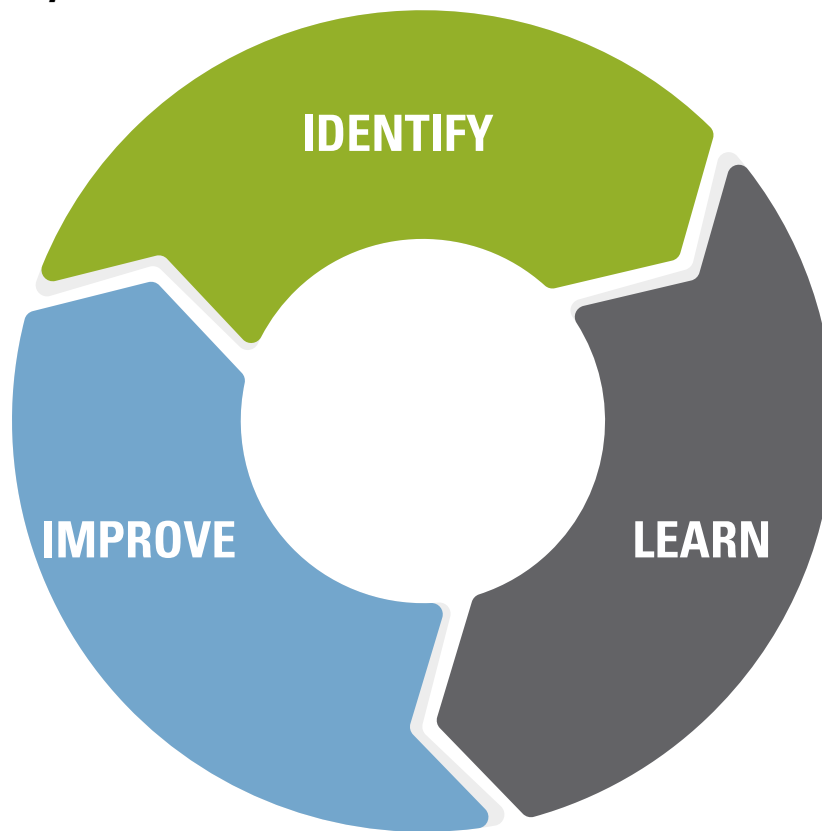
There are tools and steps that can support any educator eager to work with colleagues to improve their practices (Sheehy & Ceballos, 2018).

Option 1: Sequence of Events – Planning to Debrief Cycle (Sheehy & Ceballos, 2018)

Step 1: Plan	Determine observer and teacher to be observed. Establish expectations together. Confirm what data to collect or the focus of the observation (look-for*).
Step 2: Observe	Look specifically for evidence or lack of evidence of the look-fors and the focus of the observation.
Step 3: Analyze	Observer reviews notes for areas of strength followed by areas of growth. Determine which will have the biggest impact on teacher observed and students.
Step 4: Debrief	Powerful questioning creates a culture of deep thinking about practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reflective Conversation – Let these questions guide the conversation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were you doing to help all students learn? 2. If you had the opportunity to re-teach the entire lesson, what, if anything, would you do differently (Randall, 2018)? • Jim Knight’s Impact Cycle – Identify lesson, debrief on reflective questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch a conversation and listen for opportunities to offer feedback. 2. Invite the observed teacher to do the thinking.

*For literacy peer coaching, the Application of Concepts Tool will provide specific “look-fors.”

Option 2: Impact Cycle



IDENTIFY:

- The teacher gets a clear picture of current reality by watching a video of his or her lesson or by reviewing observation data (video is best);
- The peer coach asks “Identify” questions from the Impact Cycle with the teacher to identify a goal;
- The teacher identifies a student-focused goal;
- The peer coach, teacher and/or teacher-based team establish a goal and teaching strategy:
 - The goal is based on data or the teacher’s personal reflection;
 - Develop a powerful, easy, emotionally compelling, reachable (PEERS) goal:
 - **P**owerful: Makes a big difference in children’s lives;
 - **E**asy: Simple, clear and easy to understand;
 - **E**motionally Compelling: Matters a lot to the teacher;
 - **R**eachable: Identifies a measurable outcome and strategy;
 - **S**tudent-focused: Addresses a student achievement, behavior or attitude (Knight, 2018).

LEARN:

- The peer coach and teacher learn about the teaching strategy. The peer coach can share the *LETRS Application of Concepts* checklist for this strategy:
 - Learning can be accomplished in other ways:
 - Co-teaching;
 - In the classroom with no students;
 - Visiting other classrooms;
 - Video.
- The peer coach prompts the teacher to modify the practice if the teacher wishes;
- The team must learn how to implement this strategy. The peer coach may need to model the strategy;
- The teacher chooses an approach to modeling that he or she would like to observe and identifies a time to watch modeling. The peer coach models the strategy in one or more formats;
- Teachers set a time to implement the practice.

IMPROVE:

- The teacher implements the practice;
- The teacher or peer coach gathers data in class or while viewing the class video to show student progress toward the goal. The teacher or peer coach also gathers data through one of the same methods on the teacher's implementation of the practice (usually on the previously viewed check list):
 - Video record the class for personal reflection;
 - Gather observation data;
 - Ask teachers if the students hit the goal.
- Peer coach and teacher meet to confirm direction and monitor progress:
 - What are you pleased about?
 - Did you achieve the goal?
 - If you met the goal, do you want to identify another goal, take a break, or keep refining the current new practice?
 - If you do not meet the goal, do you want to stick with the current practice or try a new one?
 - What are your next actions?
 - On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best lesson you have ever taught and 1 being the worst, how would you rank that lesson?
 - What pleased you about the lesson?
 - What would have to change to move the lesson closer to a 10? What would your class be doing differently if the lesson was a 10?
 - Tell me more about what that change would look like.
 - How would we measure that change?
 - Do you want that to be your goal?
 - If you could achieve that goal, would it really matter to you?
 - What teaching strategy can you use to meet your goal?
 - What are the next steps?
- The peer coach and teacher make adaptations and plan next actions until the teacher meets the goal.

Using the Decision Rules

Collaborative	Formal
Teacher-based teams Article and book studies Conversations about student work Video analysis and discussion Intervention planning meetings (pre-referral, IAT RTI) Instructional rounds	Coaching Cycles (Impact Cycle and Plan to Debrief) Co-teaching Co-planning Modeling teaching practices

Use Application of Concepts
with Formal Peer Coaching

Focus on one section at a time. The selected section should correspond to the training teachers have had or are receiving. This would be used in the **Plan** (Plan to Debrief Cycle) step or **Identify** (Impact Cycle) step to plan for areas of observation:

- Use this tool to **identify or plan** an area of focus for the coaching cycle: Determine if the student is at benchmark or below benchmark, based on assessment cut scores;
 - Section 1: Teaching Phonological Awareness;
 - Section 2: Teaching Beginning Decoding and Spelling;
 - Section 3: Teaching Advanced Phonics, Spelling and Word Study;
 - Section 4: Developing Vocabulary and Oral Language;
 - Section 5: Mediating Text Comprehension;
 - Section 6: General Classroom Atmosphere.
- Use this tool in the Learn or Analyze/Debrief Steps to give suggestions and feedback to improve practice. Peer coaches also can model the strategies or processes in the LETRS Application of Concepts tool. See the LETRS Application of Concepts tool for specific skills.

Section 9: Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal	<p>The principal's role is to develop the capacity of every teacher to meet every student's academic needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With building leadership teams, develop a plan to monitor and measure increases in teacher development and student achievement through regular, ongoing classroom walkthroughs and monthly building leadership team data analysis; • Develop increasing instructional knowledge by observing and talking with teacher-based teams; • Ensure teacher-based teams identify models of high-quality classroom instruction based on best practice research to replicate those practices throughout the school; • Develop a culture of purposeful collaboration and interdependence with an emphasis on improving student achievement.
Peer coach in role of observer	<p>Develop positive and supportive relationships. Help address learning challenges through modeling, co-teaching and offering feedback after observations and reflective questioning.</p>
Peer coach in role of TBT facilitator	<p>Help address learning challenges through feedback, reflective questioning and application of skills learned in professional development. Monitor and evaluate assessment data to determine improvements in instructional practice and student achievement.</p>
Teacher(s) in role of "observee"	<p>Promote positive and supportive relationships. Determine areas of focus for formal coaching practices with peer coach (coaching cycles). Develop professional knowledge through dialogue with peer coach. Engage in the reflective conversation to analyze personal practice.</p>
Teacher(s) serving on teacher-based teams	<p>Engage in thoughtful data analysis Develop professional knowledge through team dialogue. Analyze practices and strategies based on student outcome measures.</p>

(Killion, Harrison, Bryan, & Clifton, 2012)

“Some coaching programs have been eliminated because teachers, coaches, and principals are uncertain about what the coach’s role is, and so they fail to demonstrate that coaches are effective in improving teaching and student learning.”

(Killion et al.,2012)

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