Coaching in Independent Schools: A Roundtable Discussion

Chase Mitsuda | Punahou School (HI)
Lou Scerra | Newark Academy (NJ)
Allison Schultz | The Episcopal Academy (PA)
Colleen Worrell | St. Mark’s School (MA)

### Session Agenda & Goals

#### Coaching in Independent Schools Roundtable

**Session Objectives:**
- Examine coaching as an effective form of individual & collective professional learning
- Consider approaches to coaching from 4 different independent schools
- Facilitate Q&A/discussion with participants to learn with & from each other
- Network & consider ways we might continue to connect beyond this workshop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHY</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Framing</td>
<td>Share session approach &amp; objectives and listen to each other as we share the goals &amp; ideas we bring to this learning experience</td>
<td><a href="#">Slides for this presentation</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACTIVITY: What Brings You Here? Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">A Coach for Every Teacher (ASCD)</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Case Study #1: Punahou School</td>
<td>Consider the approaches of four different schools that have implemented coaching</td>
<td><a href="#">What Good Coaches Do</a></td>
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<td>Case Study #2: Newark Academy</td>
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<td><a href="#">Educational Leadership</a></td>
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<td>Case Study #3: Episcopal Academy</td>
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<td><a href="#">Selected Readings of Coaching</a></td>
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<td>Case Study #4: St. Mark's School</td>
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<td><a href="#">Additional Coaching Resources</a></td>
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<td>11:40</td>
<td>ACTIVITY: Q&amp;A/Discussion</td>
<td>Learn with &amp; from each other through dialogue</td>
<td><a href="#">What is a Coaching Conversation?</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:55</td>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
<td>Address how we might continue networking with each other beyond this session</td>
<td><a href="#">Additional Coaching Resources</a></td>
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“The essence of coaching lies in helping others & unlocking their potential.”

**Teacher Coaching Improves Instructional Practice, Student Achievement (Figure 1)**

On average, teacher coaching raises the quality of teachers’ instructional practice and their impact on student achievement by 0.49 standard deviations and 0.18 standard deviations, respectively—as much as or more than the differences observed between a novice teacher and an experienced veteran.

**Graph:**
- Effect of coaching: 0.49
- Low estimate: 0.2
- High estimate: 0.4
- Effect of coaching: 0.18
- Low estimate: 0.05
- High estimate: 0.2

**Impact on instructional practice**
- Gap between novice and veteran teachers

**Impact on student achievement**
- Gap between novice and veteran teachers

**Source:** Authors' calculations

**Kraft & Blazar, “Taking Teacher Coaching to Scale” (2018)**
What brings YOU here?

Activity → Turn & Talk

As long as everything is exactly the way I want it, I'm totally flexible.
Listening may be the single most creative act we perform, we listen and create reality based on what we hear in each moment...

Without listening dialogue cannot exist

Quick Round-Robin Share Out
Not simply "how do we coach?" ➔ "how do we do coaching well"?

"Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance."

ATUL GAWANDE
“[A]ccording to Galey and Knight, instructional coaches, school administrators, & policymakers across the country need to work together to standardize and develop a **clear and comprehensive definition for the role of an instructional coach**. Their research found that coaches report operating best when their role is well defined, and the current lack of a clear and shared definition creates tension for coaches and causes co-workers to underappreciate an instructional coach’s work.”

-- Brookings Institute, “Instructional Coaching Holds Promise as a Method to Improve Teachers’ Impact” (2019)
# Coaching Must-Haves

"Congrats on your new role! What exactly do instructional coaches do?"

"I have absolutely no idea!"

@lisa_westman

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## We’ll Share Our:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY</th>
<th>Purpose &amp; goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT</td>
<td>Definition &amp; shared understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOW</td>
<td>Approach, process, &amp; what it looks like in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO WHAT</td>
<td>Impact &amp;/or lessons learned</td>
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WHY:
Purpose and Goals

* Teachers College Approach to Reading Instruction K-5
* Differentiated and Individualized Coaching Towards Coherence
* Connectivity and Interdependence
**WHAT: Definition and Shared Understanding**

* Support fellow educators in studying student learning and in identifying strengths and next steps in student work.

* Recommend the best and most current resources and materials to support teacher and student work.

* Offer modeling, coaching, and conversation to facilitate professional learning.

* Celebrate and share successes across our learning community.

### What is the Role of a Literacy Coach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Do Coaches Do?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Support fellow educators in studying student learning and engagement, and in identifying strengths and next steps in student work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Recommend the best and most current resources and materials to support your work.</td>
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<td>* Offer modeling, coaching, and conversation to facilitate professional learning.</td>
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<td>* Celebrate and share successes across our learning community.</td>
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### Structures for Professional Learning

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Labsite</th>
<th>Classroom Visits and Coaching</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Studying Professional Materials Together</strong></td>
<td><strong>Labsite</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>* Units of Study</td>
<td>A Labsite is a joining of teachers in one classroom with students. Teachers observe lessons and share in learning together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Resources on Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>* Collaboration &amp; sharing ideas across classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Studying Student Work</td>
<td>* Studying methods that transfer across many classrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Resources and collaboration on Workplace</td>
<td>* Demonstration &amp; modeling in a context that is interactive</td>
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<td>* nkyerl.com/workplaceX5</td>
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### What is the Role of the Teacher?

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<th>Classrooom Visits and Coaching</th>
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<tr>
<td>* Ask us anything! We're only an email away!</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Discuss the units and materials with colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Suggest resources that might benefit others</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Know that your expertise is valued &amp; we hope that you'll share the great things you do!</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Come expecting to brainstorm &amp; problem solve (not to see a perfect example)</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Stay focused on students</td>
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<td>* Teach your usual reading workshop or literacy lesson</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Take a reflective stance: generate questions, look for patterns, develop new theories about your students</td>
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HOW:
Approach and process

Internal Hiring

Coaching for Coaches

Teacher Institutes

Parent Engagement
HOW:
What it looks like in practice

Classroom Visits

Supporting Individualized Goals

Labsites

Sharing

Celebrating
SO WHAT: Impact

**Collaboration**

Involving students in the organization of the classroom library helps create an ownership of their books. This work is challenging but as these teachers shared with me, the discussions between students is so valuable.

**Coherence**

The kids enjoyed sorting the books together and had interesting discussions about their groupings. It also gave them a chance to see what kind of nonfiction books we had and got them interested and excited to read what they saw.

**Empowerment**

What workplace is for: inspiration. Thinking how we get kids categorizing books just so they can see what we have beyond their spines. Create stupid categories? Ok. They are touching books and will no doubt find something they wouldn’t otherwise. Books taller than they are wide. Books with an adverb in the title. We’re in.

**Conversations**

I agree Kris Schwenkel, the beauty of a student built library is that it’s ever changing and evolving. As the year unfolds students will create new categories based on authors message, readers recommendations, the possibilities are endless. The teacher is part of the process, observing and learning about this year’s readers as well as having those wonderful conversations about what is found within the covers.
SO WHAT: Lessons Learned

* Need for time and space (schedule, priorities, substitutes)
* Need for resources (especially books)
* Shared accountability
* Administrative support
* Coaching linked to teacher goal setting
* Build capacity of teacher leaders
* #BetterTogether
The Episcopal Academy
The mission of The Episcopal Academy’s Coaching Team is to build instructional capacity around research-based best practices, strengthen collegial bonds, and to aid in establishing a culture of growth mindset and continuous improvement throughout the campus. Additionally, Episcopal Academy’s Coaching Team serves the community by promoting the tenets of exceptional teaching as described in EA’s Teaching Excellence Document.
WHAT: Definition and Shared Understanding

- Coaching is Voluntary
- Peers serve as coaches
- Based on observations and driven by Goals
- Variety of Methods
- Non-evaluative
- Relationship is first and foremost one of Trust
- Teacher is the driver of work, and owner of improvements
HOW:
Approach and process

1. Study Group
2. Coaching Cohort
3. Nascent Beginnings
HOW:
What it looks like in practice

People learn better when they have more opportunities to perform with formative feedback.
- Andy Van Shaack
SO WHAT:
Lessons Learned

IMPACT:
● Confidence - building
● Supportive of Growth
● Conversation
● Collaboration
● Resources
● Personalization

Next Steps:
1. Build Instructional Coaching Corp
2. Build understanding of Instructional Coaching around Campus
3. Certification?
4. Assess progress in Spring 2020
Newark Academy
WHY INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING: INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

PD Wish List from Faculty Survey:
- **Greater individualized attention** in finding resources and receiving feedback
- **Programming** that is actionable & relevant to classroom teaching
- **Optionality** and flexibility
- **Perspective** (desire to share with colleagues and/or connect with those outside the building)
“Workshops led teachers to use new skills in the classroom only ten percent of the time…when coaching was introduced — when a colleague watched them try the new skills in their own classroom and provided suggestions — adoption rates passed ninety percent.”

— Atul Gawande discussing a study in *The New Yorker*
Peer-to-peer coaching checked: All of our boxes

- Answers faculty desire for individualized, actionable, classroom-relevant PD
- Consistent with best practices in education and recent trends in management (i.e. more frequent, informal feedback)
- Mission aligned: “Newark Academy will contribute to the world engaged individuals instilled with a passion for learning, a standard of excellence, and a generosity of spirit.”
WHAT: THE INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING PROGRAM
WHAT: PILOT PROGRAM BASICS

WHO & WHEN
- Two instructional coaches per academic year
- Each coach will work with two teachers during four seven-week coaching sessions
- During the pilot year, ~16 faculty members will participate on a voluntary basis

THE SESSIONS
- Reflecting on current practices
- Identifying goals, strengths, and gaps
- Strategizing approaches and evaluating outcomes
- Observations and feedback

TRAINING & COMPENSATION
- Workshops/texts from Bright Morning Consulting (Elena Aguilar)
- One course reduction and a stipend
WHAT: (INQUIRY-BASED, RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED) INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

WHAT AN INSTRUCTIONAL COACH IS…
- Critical thinking partner
- Listener and questioner
- Supporter
- Resource-seeker
- Perspective-giver

WHAT AN INSTRUCTIONAL COACH ISN’T…
- Evaluator
- Spy for administration
- All-knowing
- Master of “everything”

“Good coaches…speak with credibility, make a personal connection, and focus little on themselves.” – Jim Knight in Atul Gawande’s “Personal Best”
HOW WE ENSURED A SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH

FACULTY BUY-IN
- “Early adopters” & “influencers” → credibility
- Confidential and non-evaluative nature of program
- Oversight by PD Committee not Dean of Faculty
- Internal marketing campaign to generate excitement
- Seek ways to share learnings with community

QUALITY OF COACHING
- Limit initial session to two faculty members
- Revise *Criteria for Excellent Teaching* to ensure coaches possess a clear vision for institutional values
- Ensure coaching sessions do not coincide with midterms
- Collect feedback after each coaching session
HOW: MARKETING CAMPAIGN

COACHLESS IN SEATTLE

Clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose.

Friday Morning Light

HOPE COMES ALIVE

COACHING IS COMING

KALTENBACHER HALL

AN EPIC NEW SERIES

HBO

JANUARY 23, 2:45 PM
“Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance.”

-Atul Gawande, “Personal Best”
“Meeting with my coach twice a cycle and committing to the program made me a better teacher.”

“I felt an overwhelming sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. I am not sure there is a way to better support my development. If there is, I am not aware of one.”

“It was just fun and exciting to nerd out about teaching.”

I now have a “greater willingness to explore & take risks in developing content/activities.”

“The program makes you feel valued and acknowledged. There is a lot of experience and knowledge among our faculty. It’s great to share stories, insights, and advice with each other.”

“The coaching program is a purposeful space where we can think deeply and carefully about our practices. I believe the coaching program is the most effective way to impact our students’ achievement.”
WHY Coaching?

Make “school” true learning organizations where everyone in the system thrives

GOALS?
1. Growth-Oriented Conversations
2. Collaboration & Collective Efficacy
3. Culture of Continuous Learning

⇒ to positively impact STUDENT learning/experience
Coachng is a commitment to partnering with educators in an ongoing, deliberate process designed to support their learning and growth as they strive to deepen their impact on students and student learning.

HOW do we define coaching?
WHAT does coaching look like at SM?

- Faculty working one-on-one and/or in teams with the Center Director
- Professional learning for departmental leadership to build capacity
- Non-evaluative classroom visits to ensure each teacher is “seen, known, and grown”
System of flexible learning & growth pathways
SO WHAT? Impact

- Collaborative learning culture
- Teacher leadership
- Faculty recruitment
SO WHAT? 3 of Many Lessons Learned

#1: Build a shared understanding & practice of “coaching”

“Just telling people what to do is not a good strategy for change. For coaching relationships to work, we must view them through the lens of a partnership.”

#2: Focus on “Coaching Conversations” & Relationship-Building

Stages of Coaching TEMPLATE

The GROWTH Approach from GCI
"Coaching is complex... Coaches need regular professional learning opportunities to help them understand and become skilled leaders of adult learning and the change process. Coaches also need to hone their own knowledge of research-based instructional practices and evolving expectations for student learning."

-- Coaching for Impact Report (2016)
Wrap-Up & Discussion

“If we create a culture where every teacher believes they need to improve, not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better, there is no limit to what we can achieve.”

—Dylan Wiliam
Thank You

tinyurl.com/coachingNAIS