

Best Practices

Academic Coaches (Literacy and Mathematics)

Big Ideas	Developing	Effective	Highly Effective
Knowledge base of content, curriculum, pedagogy, and coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses knowledge of the subject matter, curriculum, and district initiatives. • Participates in district staff development to build understanding of Best Practices. • Participates in coaching labs as a learner to build capacity to accept teacher feedback. • Is familiar with Content-Focused Coaching tools and Principles of Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a deep knowledge base of subject matter and curriculum, district initiatives, pedagogy, and Best Practices. • Uses Content-Focused Coaching tools and processes and Principles of Learning to support teachers in planning and reflecting on instruction. • Skillfully works with adult learners and is beginning to adapt methods of coaching, based on teacher needs and interests. • Reads professional books and journals and attends professional conferences to deepen knowledge base. • Actively participates in professional development to build a repertoire of research-based practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a deep knowledge base of subject matter and curriculum, district initiatives, pedagogy, and Best Practices, and communicates and models these effectively with teachers. • Effectively gathers and interprets individual and schoolwide data to inform coaching decisions. • Supports teachers in differentiating instruction for students at different grade levels and with different needs (e.g., ELL, special education, gifted and talented). • Uses Content-Focused Coaching tools and processes and Principles of Learning to support teachers in planning and reflecting on rigorous instruction. • Skillfully works with adult learners and is able to adapt methods of coaching, based on teacher needs and interests identified through observations, discussions, and student data analysis. • Reads professional books and journals, attends professional conferences to deepen knowledge base, connects this new learning with practice, and meets with colleagues to share new ideas.
Ability to build relationships with teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to build relationships with teachers through modeling, supporting teachers with materials, assessments, and scheduling. • Works to develop relationships where teachers feel coach is consistent, reliable, positive, and confidential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds trusting and respectful relationships with teachers through the use of active listening and norms of collaboration to provide a safe environment for collaborative learning. • Establishes relationships where teachers feel coach is consistent, reliable, positive, and confidential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds trusting and respectful relationships with teachers, evidenced by teachers' taking risks, reflecting on practices, asking for support, and problem solving with the coach. • Supports respectful communication and productive collaboration (e.g., through active listening, using the Norms of Collaboration, contracting). • Is consistent, reliable, positive, and confidential in working with teachers. • Questions own practices and is open to feedback from teachers; takes stance of learner, not expert. • Builds on teachers' strengths to refine practice.

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Presentation of professional development in large groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops an agenda and prepares materials for large group professional development. Presents information and/or provides activities to involve participants in the topic. Presents district/quadrant-developed professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates the purpose and agenda for professional development. Presents new information or clarifies existing information. Provides opportunities for participants to discuss their own experiences and/or engage in activities relevant to the topic. Considers audience's various needs and interests when planning professional development. Creates staff development sessions as well as presents district/quadrant-developed professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates effectively in a large group and uses a variety of professional development and facilitation techniques based on Best Practice research for adult learners: discussion protocols, different groupings, accountable talk, engaging activities that are relevant and purposeful and tied to classroom instruction, time to share instructional strategies, constructivist learning, and collaborative and cooperative activities. Focuses on classroom practice through examination of artifacts of practice (student work, teacher lessons, videotapes), guiding questions, and reflection. Provides professional development in flexible groupings (needs-based, inquiry-based, vertical, horizontal). Adapts district-developed professional learning to meet teachers' individual needs at his or her school.
Facilitation of small group learning (e.g., grade-level groups, book study groups, inquiry-based groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and facilitates grade-level meetings. Focuses meetings on topics recommended by area specialists or suggested by participating teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides ongoing, purposeful learning opportunities for teachers through grade-level or study group meetings. Uses student work and/or protocols to focus instructional conversations. Includes professional reading in some small group meetings. Creates and uses forms to document progress and ensure follow-through. Conducts additional small groups based on teacher needs and interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports collaboration in setting and maintaining norms, developing short and long-range goals for working together, and writing a clear intended learning statement for each meeting. Works with teachers to build community and create an environment that supports risk-taking and willingness to share practices using Norms of Collaboration or other tools. Uses Critical Friends Groups protocols and accountable talk to support active engagement and ownership on the part of all participants. Guides group in using Core Issues, student data, lesson study, and artifacts of classroom practice to encourage more rigorous reflection. Incorporates professional reading into group work. Uses a variety of data sources to inform discussions regarding student achievement (e.g., assessment notebooks, formal and informal assessments, writing notebooks, standards, rubrics, status of the class).

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Individualized teacher support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently works with teachers to discuss and problem solve their questions. Models with teachers the use of curriculum to explain decisions and to reflect on lessons when demonstrating teaching. Uses student data in some discussions with teachers to identify instructional issues and develop a plan for working together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborates with teachers using student data to identify issues and monitor student progress. Examines with teachers the use of Core Issues to explain decisions and to reflect on lessons when demonstrating teaching. Reflects on Best Practices with teachers to develop shared understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides differentiated teacher support based on teacher needs and interests as mutually identified through discussion with the teacher, using student data, Best Practices, the Learning Continuum, Core Issues, curricular materials, etc., to develop a plan for working together. Collaborates with teachers in an atmosphere of co-accountability where the coach and teacher hold themselves jointly accountable for student learning. Works with teachers in an ongoing way over time and uses a Gradual Release of Responsibility model of support, which may include modeling, demonstration teaching, co-teaching, and coaching. Models the use of Core Issues to explain decisions and to reflect on lesson with teacher when demonstrating teaching. Uses Content-Focused Coaching process of pre-conference, teaching the lesson, and post-conference to reflect on the teaching and learning; Core Issues are infused throughout the process, and the tone is nonjudgmental when engaging in 1:1 coaching. Purposefully addresses the Criteria for Coaching Practice (Focus, Structure, Dialogue, Content, Core Issues, Specificity, Flexibility, Co-Accountability, Anticipating and Reflecting on Student Learning, Interpersonal Skills). Builds capacity and empowers teachers in becoming more proficient in using Best Practices and Principles of Learning, in differentiating instruction for students, in assessing the impact of their instruction, and in being reflective practitioners. Provides resources to support implementation, such as books, articles, and/or sub time for observations.
Leadership in building a professional learning community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks input from principal about broader coaching goals and summarizes and shares coaching interactions. Takes an active role in promoting collaboration among diverse staff representatives and staff development planning. Develops trusting relationships with teachers and approaches them for consultation on diverse issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets periodically with principal to share insights, to discuss coaching goals, and to coordinate next steps. Takes steps to help develop a strong and diverse leadership team to discuss planning, district initiatives, data, and community-building. Organizes pilot opportunities for teacher empowerment and encourages and supports teachers to try them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets regularly with principal to clearly communicate work and collaboration happening with teachers. Participates in a leadership team, with principal and representatives from different grade levels and specials, to collaboratively analyze data, discuss implementation of district initiatives, set goals, plan for staff development and program improvement, and foster the development of a caring community of learners at the school. Encourages distributed leadership and empowers teachers to share ideas, offer staff development, lead study groups, and visit each other's classrooms.

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Professionalism in meeting coaching responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes time for every teacher and communicates about scheduling. Plans schedule for staff development and meetings and provides an agenda. Gathers feedback and considers it when planning professional development. Attends district professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructs a schedule that considers individual teachers' needs and communicates it in a timely way. Provides a schedule of meetings and staff development before the events with clear agendas. Prioritizes and participates in district staff development, attends coaching labs, and creates opportunities for family involvement activities, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively manages time to best meet all teachers' individual needs and keeps schedule posted. Provides schedules for staff development and group meetings in advance; meetings are well-planned with clear agendas. Routinely incorporates staff feedback on professional development to guide future sessions and meet teachers' needs. Fulfills all responsibilities of district coaching role, including actively participating in district staff development and coaching labs, taking responsibility for family involvement activities, etc.