



## Introduction of Strategy

In this guide, we define teacher coaching as a partnership between a teacher and an expert that is focused on improving teacher performance. We define feedback as information provided to teachers about student learning in their classrooms and/or their performance toward professional goals. Effective coaching and feedback results in changes to teacher practice and student achievement. Research has shown that the following components support effective teacher coaching and feedback. It is important to note that while there is evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of each component (see research following each component), these components are most effective when implemented together. For instance, if a school or district decides to analyze data to determine coaching needs but does not establish roles, systems, and structures to support an effective coaching model, coaching and feedback efforts will likely yield limited results. The following ideas were found in research to significantly impact coaching practices. These components include:

1. Coaching practices driven by concrete data analysis
2. Established roles, systems, and structures that support an effective coaching model
3. Collaboration with coaches to ensure teachers' needs are met through concrete, manageable, and useful feedback.
4. Monitoring the impact of teacher coaching and feedback.

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## Evidence Base

ESSA defines levels of research based on the quality of the study (Levels 1-4). CDE requires that schools and districts identify the research base for strategies that they select for their Unified Improvement Plans, and for applications for school improvement funds in the EASI application. **The research on Teacher Coaching and Feedback that is cited here meets the definition of Level 1 research.**

The research cited focused on the impact on changing teacher practices when all Teacher Coaching and Feedback components were implemented. In addition, substantial research meeting levels 1-4 have been completed; they found that when implemented to a high level, Teacher Coaching and Feedback had an impact on teachers' instructional practices and student achievement. *The complete list of studies can be found at the end of this strategy guide.*

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## Considerations

**Possible Root Causes include inadequate, inconsistent or ineffective...**

- Coaching culture
- Adult culture and beliefs
- Post observation follow-up
- Implementation of practices

## Is this strategy a good fit for your district/school?

- Does this major improvement strategy focus on a priority performance challenge and associated root cause(s)?
- Are the expected outcomes of this major improvement strategy highly valued?
- Do key leaders support this major improvement strategy? Do key leaders have the capacity to lead the strategy ongoing?
- What are the skills and competencies needed to implement this major improvement strategy with fidelity? What support/professional development do staff members need to implement this strategy effectively?
- Are the time, effort and resources needed for implementation feasible for the staff involved?

## Considerations for Strategy Implementation

- What are the intended purposes of the coaching program? How are they made clear to everyone--including teachers, coaches, principals, district administrators, parents, students?
- What are the ongoing professional learning opportunities for coaches, teachers, and administrators? What additional support do coaches receive from both district and school-based administrators?
- What is the nature of the relationship between a coach and the teachers with whom he/she works? How do administrators help to support this relationship?
- Where do the topics/issues for coaching come from?
- How do coaches gather evidence of their effectiveness and become self reflective and proactive in making improvements to the coaching program?

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## Implementation Guide

### Core Component 1: Establish Roles, Systems, and Structures

Action Steps	Description
Communicate the coaching model	Communicate the coaching model with its underlying philosophy that will be used both verbally and in writing. Identify the purpose of teacher coaching, ensuring that stakeholders understand that teacher coaching is focused on improving teacher performance and student achievement.
Identify experts to serve as coaches	Identify individuals who have expertise, who can serve or develop their skills as a coach (e.g., peers, veteran teachers, school leaders, external consultants) to serve as coaches for the identified areas of focus. Articulate the expectations for each role in the partnership, including how the partnership relates to the teacher's evaluation. For example, it may be important to indicate that the coaching experience is independent of any evaluative relationship, if this is the case.
Determine system for capturing records of coaching	Coaches need to document not only what or how they work with colleagues, but also what their next steps are for providing ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Determine a consistent format for capturing a way for both the coach and teacher to keep track of their work together.

Create opportunities for coaches	Create opportunities for coaches to observe and meet with teachers. Revise the staff schedule, as needed, to develop a coaching cycle that supports the coach's ability to observe teachers on a regular basis and meet with them to provide timely, supportive, and constructive feedback. Studies of effective coaching programs often include coaching sessions that occur at least every other week.
Train Coaches	Train coaches in effective coaching practices. Ensure coaches receive adequate training before beginning their work with teachers. Additionally, provide clear guidance about the type of work coaches should engage in with teachers. For example, coaches may provide coaching through modeling, observation, and 1:1 meetings, and they may support teachers with instructional planning, pedagogy, assessment, and student engagement.

### Core Component 2: Implement Concrete Data Analysis

Action Steps	Description
Perform ongoing data analysis	Teacher coaching should be informed by an ongoing analysis of student performance data to determine areas of strength and areas for growth. Performance data can be obtained through summative assessments, formative assessments, student work, and observations.
Identify additional data sources	Additional data sources, such as observation data or teacher experience, may also be useful in determining which teachers are in need of teacher coaching and the type of coaching and feedback that will be most valuable. For example, if there are teachers new to teaching, these individuals may require more targeted support and coaching from the onset.

### Core Component 3: Collaborate with Coaches

Action Steps	Description
Coordinate feedback cycle with coaches	Coordinate with coaches to ensure feedback teachers receive from coaches and leaders is consistent. Consider having regular meetings with coaches and school leaders to ensure observations are normed and messages are aligned. Furthermore, make sure that coaches' feedback and suggestions support the school's priorities, goals, and expectations.
Ensure feedback effectiveness	Provided feedback should be goal-referenced and provide teachers with information about their progress toward a goal - possibly a yearlong professional goal or a short-term student achievement goal for the coaching cycle. Either way, the goal should be clear to both the teacher and the person providing the feedback (e.g., the coach, an evaluator) and should focus the feedback so it is not too broad or vague.

<p>Ensure feedback is actionable and timely.</p>	<p>Effective feedback includes concrete, specific, and timely information about what the teacher can do better next time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback should be descriptive and free of judgment. For example, feedback may provide information about specific numbers of students that met learning targets or engaged in a task, rather than a judgment such as “students did great.”</li> <li>• Feedback may include tangible, measurable next steps. Teachers may find feedback particularly useful when it includes these types of clear suggestions. For example, rather than telling a teacher to “engage more students,” provide feedback with specific strategies such as, “try using wait time of at least five seconds after each question, cold call students at least three times each lesson, and allow more than one student to answer the same question through use of turn and talks or think-pair-shares.” Furthermore, such next steps allow the observer points to reference during subsequent observations and a means to hold teachers accountable for implementing feedback.</li> </ul>
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#### Core Component 4: Monitor Coaching Impact

Action Steps	Description
<p>Collect data on coaching cycles</p>	<p>Collect data on the quality and effectiveness of teacher coaching. For example, administer surveys about the coaching model, and/or conduct learning walks that are focused on observing how teachers are implementing what they have learned from coaches and analyze what improvements are needed based on these observations.</p>
<p>Review student performance</p>	<p>Review student performance data to determine whether coaching efforts have had an impact on student achievement and growth.</p>
<p>Review observation and feedback records</p>	<p>Review observation and feedback records to ensure teachers and observers have been held accountable for implementing next steps. Ensure each observer has a system for following up with teachers on specific action steps. This follow-up may come in the form of subsequent observations, teachers reporting back, or another approach appropriate for the context. Keep track of observations (e.g., using a spreadsheet or observation software) that allows you to easily determine whether coaches are completing observations as intended.</p>

### Academic Studies Leading to ESSA Rating

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- Darling-Hammond, Linda, Maria Hyler, and Madelyn Gardner. "Effective Teacher Professional Development." Learning Policy Institute, May 2017. Web.
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- Knight, Jim. *The Impact Cycle: What Instructional Coaches Should Do to Foster Powerful Improvements in Teaching*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2018. Print.
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- Park, V., and A. Datnow. "Co-Constructing Distributed Leadership: District and School Connections in Data-Driven Decision-Making." *School Leadership and Management* 29.5 (2009): 477-494. Print.
- Robinson, V. J., C. A. Lloyd, and K. J. Rowe. "The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 44.5 (2008, December): 635-674. Print.
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