

Resource E

Coaching Lab Overview



Overview

- Coaching labs are an opportunity to engage in job-embedded professional development as a coaching team. The labs are structured to include an observation of a coach in action and then a debrief to unpack implications and points of learning that relate to our work with teachers. A prebrief also provides time for the coach to set the focus and share tools and strategies that have been used.
- Coaching labs are not designed to model coaching. Rather, they are a chance to stretch our thinking as coaches. Typically, coaching lab hosts are open and reflective, and they are willing to share their practice and challenges with others. The host selects the focus for the observation and whether or not it will include a lesson. The facilitator works with the host to ensure that she or he feels prepared.

Things to Consider

- Coaching lab hosts aren't experts; they are learners. We are not observing with the purpose of "learning from the master." We are observing to expand our thinking, generate questions, and develop a view of what Student-Centered Coaching looks like in our schools.
- Coaching labs are limited to ten participants.
- Coaching labs are authentic examples of our work; we like to avoid dog and pony shows.
- Coaching labs adhere to a protocol and norms for observation.

Planning for Coaching Labs

- A lab host is determined, and then the lab host identifies the teacher(s) who will participate.
- The lab host determines the focus of the coaching lab.
- The facilitator and lab host plan the focus and schedule in a planning call.
- The teacher only participates in the observation portions of the coaching lab. She or he doesn't attend the prebrief or debrief.

Coaching Lab Protocol

Goal for the Coaching Cycle:	
Learning Target(s) for the Lesson:	
Prebrief (30–45 minutes)	<p>The facilitator introduces the protocol and shares the norms for the observation. The coach provides background about the coaching work that is taking place with the teacher or team of teachers. This includes sharing the learning target(s) and plan for the lesson. The coach may also choose to share tools, logs, and artifacts that have been used to organize the coaching work. Participants are invited to ask clarifying questions.</p> <p>Observation Norms for Coaching Labs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come with a positive attitude, and be a learner. We are not here to critique or give feedback to the coach or teacher.• Avoid side conversations. Please do not speak to students unless it has been an established part of the process.• Get close to the action by collecting student evidence during the lesson. A note catcher will be provided for this purpose.• Be ready to think through the entire process. This includes the prebrief, observation, and debrief. Participants are expected to be a part of the full process, rather than popping into certain portions. <p>Note: The teacher does not attend the prebrief.</p>
Observe the Co-Teaching Session (30–45 minutes)	<p>Participants observe the teacher and coach as they work together in the classroom. Observers practice noticing and naming during this part of the process. The facilitator provides a note catcher for this purpose.</p>
Observe the Co-Planning Session (30 minutes)	<p>Participants observe as the teacher and coach co-plan using the student evidence that was gathered during the lesson. While observing, participants take notes to capture the coaching moves and language that are used.</p>
Debrief the Coaching (60 minutes)	<p>Participants debrief in the following rounds. During the first three rounds the lab host is a silent observer. Then the host joins in after Round 3 to answer questions and share thinking.</p> <p>Round 1: What happened?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants take turns describing what they noticed during either part of the observation. The focus may be on the student learning, coaching moves, coaching language, etc. Use objective language, such as: “I saw,” “I heard,” “I noticed.” <p>Round 2: What does it mean?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants share implications for student and teacher learning that surfaced as a result of the observation. A possible stem is “Because . . . then . . .” <p>Round 3: What do I wonder?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants share questions that were elicited as a result of the observation. These can be about either the observation itself or something related to their own coaching practice. The facilitator collects the questions that are then addressed by the coach. <p>Round 4: What are my next steps?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants share a next step for their own learning.