Education Support Services Teams: Instructional Coaching Model

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New Nouveau Brunswick

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New Brunswick's Vision for Enhancing Inclusive Instructional Practice

Efforts to improve student achievement can succeed only by building the capacity of teachers to improve their instructional practice and the capacity of school systems to promote teacher learning.

Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson and Orphanos (2009). Professional Learning in the Learning Profession

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Introduction

The complexity and diversity of classrooms and students in the 21st century places increasing demands on the classroom teacher to provide effective educational programming and instruction. To meet these demands we must adopt new professional practices, skills, and knowledge. Instructional coaching is increasingly being seen as the vehicle through which to address these challenges and support teachers.

Supporting teachers as they continue to develop increasingly effective instructional strategies and skills will have a significant impact on student learning. Research confirms that teachers who have been coached are more "likely than non-coached peers to transfer newly acquired teaching practices into classroom use" (Cornett and Knight, "Research on Coaching," p. 198). Several studies demonstrate coaching's potential for increasing student achievement (Norton, 2001; Blachowicz, Obrochta & Fogelberg, 2005; Schwarz & McCarthy, 2003; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001).

Coaching serves to provide teachers with the job-embedded, context-specific support that can advance both school and systemic improvement. Professional development provided through the coaching model is most effective when it is targeted and specific (differentiated to support teacher learning and practice) and guided by school, district, and province-wide goals and standards (Annenberg Institute for School Reform, 2010).

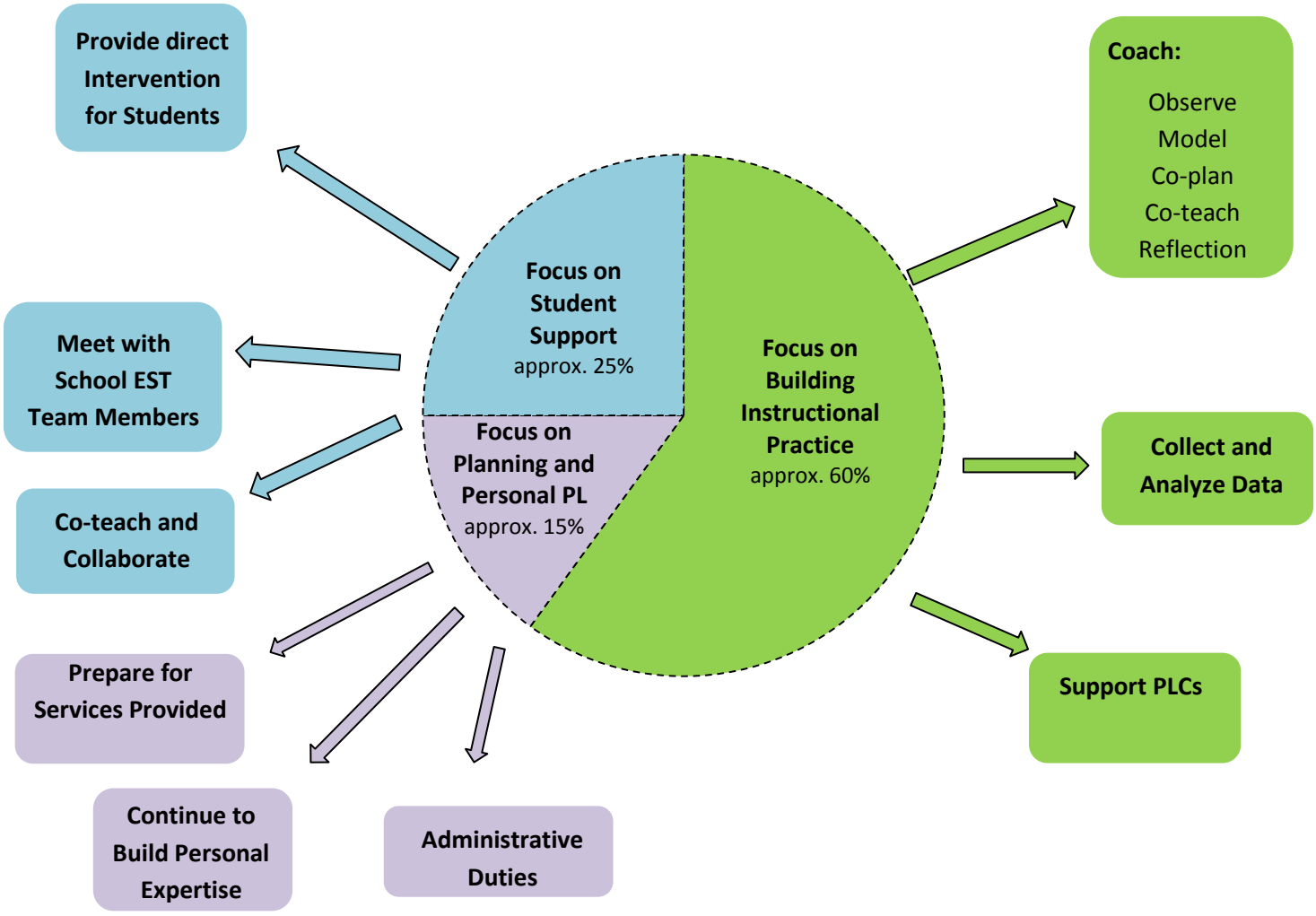
Coaching that evolves from" learning conversations where both parties use data as a point of departure for dialogue" (p. 46, "Instructional Coaching," Jim Knight) and proceeds through the collaborative process of goal-setting and purposeful planning can enhance reflection and collegiality and foster a shared understanding and refinement of best instructional practices.

The instructional coaching model is grounded in the seven principles of 'partnership philosophy' as delineated by Jim Knight:

- Equality: instructional coaches and teachers are equal partners
- Choice: teachers should have choice regarding what and how they learn
- Voice: professional learning should empower and respect the voices of teachers
- Dialogue: professional learning should enable authentic dialogue
- Reflection: reflection is an integral part of professional learning
- Praxis: teachers should apply their learning to their real-life practice as they are learning
- Reciprocity: instructional coaches should expect to get as much as they give

In order for instructional coaching to be effective and wide-spread, all stakeholders must have a full understanding of the instructional coaching model. The role of the principal in facilitating this understanding is instrumental. Professional learning opportunities and support must exist for both administrators and coaches.

Proposed Guide for Professional Practice
Education Support Teacher: Resource, Literacy, Numeracy



PLEASE NOTE: The above framework provides guidelines for the services provided by Education Support Teachers (EST). It is recognized that the percentages for each component of the role may vary during specific times of the year (e.g., beginning of the school year, semester change at the high school level).

As the K-2 level is recognized as a critical time for acquiring foundational reading skills, additional direct intervention may be offered as deemed necessary to meet students' needs.

Over the course of the implementation year (2013-14) and beyond, training and resources will be provided. It is recognized that transitioning to this new model will take time and professional learning support is necessary for existing resource, literacy, and numeracy teachers and those new to the role. The goal is for each EST to work toward these percentages as capacity is being strengthened.

The following section defines the coaching descriptors as shown in the figure above.

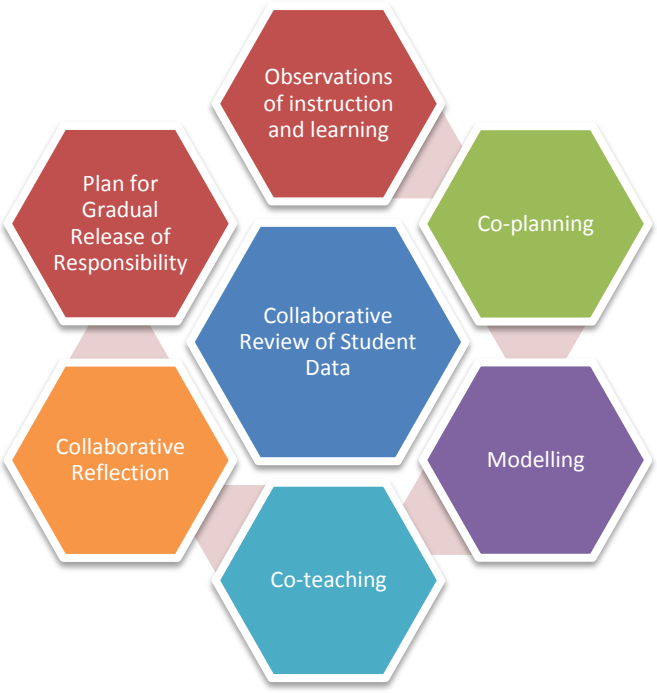
Focus on Building Instructional Practice (approx. 60%)

Coach

The practice of building instructional practice through coaching involves the teacher and the coach collaborating in the development of planned learning experiences through classroom visitation, modelling, co-teaching and the gradual release of responsibility from coach to teacher.

Supporting teachers as they continue to develop increasingly effective instructional strategies and skills will have a significant impact on student learning. Coaching serves to provide teachers with the job-embedded, context-specific support that can advance both school and systemic improvement.

New Brunswick's Coaching Model



It is recommended that coaching services are determined collaboratively by the Education Support Services team. These services will be offered initially to teachers new to the field or

their position and/or those who solicit support; however, data about student learning will determine the allocation and focus of coaching services.
Coaching partnerships will range in length based on availability and rationale for the service. Coaching should include clearly defined goals addressed within defined periods (e.g., short term and personalized to meet the needs of the educator). Offering team and/or full staff professional learning is recommended as another means for supporting teachers and building relationships.

The following is an overview of the coaching model to support teacher learning:

Observation of instruction and learning

(coach interacts in the classroom with the teacher and students)

- Initial class visits and a review of the class profile will inform the mutual goal setting between the teacher and coach. As trust builds, the visits become more strategic with specific goals for observations mutually determined by the educator with the instructional coach. Educators who are observed more frequently by their coach implement new instructional strategies more readily than non-coached peers (Matsumara, Sartoris, Bickel and Garnier, 2009).

Collaborative review of student data

(teacher with coach) - ongoing throughout cycle

- Student data will highlight ongoing needs of students and instructional decisions to address these needs will be a mutual decision. Matsumara, Garnier and Resnick (2010) found a "significant and positive increase in student achievement" based on the frequency with which teachers review assessment data (See Appendix B for a data review protocol).

Co-planning

- Selecting evidence-based teaching strategies to address student and teacher needs will be the focus of thoughtful collaborative planning.
- Identifying target standards of instructional practice (e.g., curriculum outcomes, standards, exemplars, Look-fors, N.B.'s Inclusive Education Policy) will provide a framework for learning targets and goal setting.

Modelling

(coach models instructional practice as the teacher observes)

- Part of building capacity is providing models of exemplary practice within the context of the teacher's classroom. Skillfully modelling effective student engagement and instructional practice is a critical responsibility of the coach (See Appendix C for a Model Mini-lesson Template and Appendix D for an Observation Protocol for the teacher).

Co-teaching

- To continue to enhance instructional practice, the coach and teacher engage in a co-teaching experience where the above stages inform the role each plays as

shared learning facilitators in the classroom. Further in this document, a different approach to co-teaching is recognized with the purpose of providing direct service to students, not focused primarily on building instructional practice, but addressing instructional needs of students (e.g., flexible groupings, Tier 2 or 3 interventions within the classroom).

Collaborative reflection and planning for next steps

- As part of the process of ongoing data collection and review, the teacher and coach are determining growth in the teacher's practice, student learning and recognizing ongoing areas of need. An action research question may be co-created to investigate a research-informed solution to remaining learning needs (See Appendix E for an action research template).

Planning for gradual release of responsibility

- As the teacher's confidence grows and enhanced practices become embedded, the coach gradually withdraws individual services. A planned follow up with the teacher may be determined to discuss retention of new practices and successes.

It is important to note that the professional learning provided through the coaching model is most effective when it is targeted and specific (differentiated to support teacher learning and practice) and is guided by school, district, and province-wide goals and standards (Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University, 2010).

Collect and Analyze Data

The coach leads a key role across the school in modelling effective understanding of how to collect and analyze data. In research examining improving schools, Wren and Vallejo (2009) found that "no school…made substantial gains in student achievement without a system for examining available data" (p. 17).

The EST plays a key role in examining data with teaching staffs and must:

- Have knowledge of existing assessment instruments:
  - how to use
  - strengths and limitations of each
  - types: formal (e.g., Aimsweb, Numeracy Nets); informal (e.g., exit slips, observational notes)
- Collaborate on the development of assessment tools (classroom, common, etc.)

- Help teachers and administrators with the analysis of data to inform:
  - classroom instruction
  - progress monitoring
  - school improvement plans
- Consult and collaborate with teachers at reporting periods

Support Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

- Establish predictable meeting time with school PLCs team to maintain ongoing communication
- Utilize models and strategies of consultation and collaboration
- Facilitate ongoing professional learning to enhance instructional practices to meet the needs of all learners

Focus on Student Support (approx. 25%)

Provide Direct Intervention for Students

Even with strong classroom support through coaching (Tier 1), individual or small group student interventions will likely be necessary. These interventions ideally take place in the classroom, but depending on the students' learning profile(s) and needs, an intervention outside of the classroom may be required.

EST- Numeracy and EST-Literacy will likely have more flexibility to work directly with students (Tier 2 and subject-specific Tier 3) whereas EST-Resource may provide more indirect instructional support to students, focussing on classroom application of universal design for learning and strength-based interventions for identified student needs (particularly Tier 3).

Meet with School ESS Team Members

It is critical that itinerant or onsite education support teachers are involved in a predictable schedule for meeting with the school-based Education Support Services (ESS) team. For example, an onsite EST may be available for weekly meetings, whereas an itinerant may only be available once a month, due to responsibilities in multiple schools. There is a commitment that the itinerant EST's presence can be expected and planned for at a previously agreed upon schedule.

Co-teach and Collaborate

This version of co-teaching occurs when two or more educators co-plan, co-instruct and co-assess a group of students with diverse needs in the same common learning environment

(Murawski, 2003). Although building instructional practice is a side benefit, the focus of this partnership is to primarily address the student learning needs together.

Focus on Planning and Personal Professional Learning (approx. 15%)

Prepare for Services Provided

Just as classroom teachers are provided preparation time for instructional planning, the EST requires dedicated time to plan for a variety of leadership responsibilities. These responsibilities include preparing for coaching conversations, planning modelled lessons, designing professional learning opportunities for staff, and other professional activities.

Continue to Build Personal Expertise

Within this timeframe, it is critical that the EST keep current on advances in research to share with colleagues. In order to maintain a credible and effective leadership role, EST allocate time in their schedule to continue their pursuit of knowledge and effective pedagogy.

Administrative Duties

These duties are directly associated with supporting teachers and students. For EST-Resource, examples include work on personalized learning plans (SEPs), working with educational assistants, consulting with other professionals, meetings and performing other related functions. For EST-Literacy and EST-Numeracy, these duties include progress/intervention reports in the focus area, consulting with other professionals, meetings and other related functions in support of the instructional leadership role.

The following Appendices section offers tools to implement many of the components described above. This document is a companion to the New Brunswick Online Coaching Model module. Further face-to-face training and resource materials will be provided to support the successful transition to this model.

References

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Wren, S. & Vallejo, D. (2009). Effective collaboration between instructional coaches and principals. *Retrieved from Balanced Reading.com,* January 2, 2013.

APPENDIX A

Identifying Support Needs (by Education Centres)

Education Support Teachers are school- and/or district-based, and some may have classroom teaching or intervention assignments. The number of EST available within and to a school depends on a variety of circumstances.

To determine the type and level of support required, school staffs complete a plan for success based on their school improvement plan and key provincial areas of focus. This clarifies goals, identifies assets and sets an intention for the coaching.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN					
SCHOOL:				**GRADES:**	**YEAR:**
GOALS **What are our goals for our students?** **These can be 4-6 SIP goals or other goals based on school data.**	**ACTIONS** **What practices, structures, routines, formative/summative assessments will we employ to ensure our students achieve these goals?**	**CAPACITY** **What capacity (practices, knowledge, skills, experiences, resources) do we currently have in our school that will help us put these actions into practice?**	**NEEDS** **What additional knowledge and skills are required for us to fully support students in meeting these goals?**	**LEARNING** **What steps will we take to develop the additional knowledge and skills we have identified?**	**PROGRESS MONITORING** **How will we measure our progress in ensuring students achieve these goals?** **Who will monitor progress? When?**

Adapted from the Oromocto Education Centre, ASD-West

APPENDIX B

User-Friendly Guidelines for Making Sense of Data

Before we come to any conclusions about data or make decisions based on these data, we must ask the following questions:

1. What do we know as a result of examining the data?
    a. List the facts
    b. List quantifiable statements
    c. List statements that cannot be debated or argued about

2. What do we think as a result of looking at this data?
    a. List what we think this tells us about what students can know and do
    b. List what we think this data suggests about what students are struggling with
    c. List the kinds of instruction we think are going on
    d. List the hunches we have

3. What don't we know as a result of examining the data?
    a. List information that we cannot know just by looking at the data and, therefore, should not consider in our decision

4. What do we want to know as a result of examining this data?
    a. List questions that we have about student performance
    b. List questions we have about teachers' instruction
    c. Note other information we may need to look at

5. How will this data help us improve instruction?
    a. The point of looking at the data is to prepare and plan for the most effective instruction to meet student needs. List some ways we might do that

Developed by Dennis Fox, Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Centre (2011)

APPENDIX C

Model Mini-lesson Template

Class:

Topic/ Big Idea:

Focus (Outcome, Strategy, Skill, Concept). What is being taught today?
What to look for during the learning experience: ➢ How is the teacher introducing the strategy so students will understand? ➢ How is the teacher modelling the strategy? ➢ How is the teacher providing opportunity for guided practice? ➢ What formative assessment is the teacher using to monitor student understanding? ➢ Is the teacher differentiating this learning experience for students who need extra support?
What are my thoughts on this model lesson?
Debriefing key points

Layered Coaching. Mentoring New Teachers (2007). Allen, J. Maine. Choice Literacy.

APPENDIX D

Observation Forms

Host Teacher:

Purpose for the Visit:

Sketch the Room

Focus of the Lesson

Zone in On	Distribution of Time	What Do You Notice?	What Do You Wonder?	What Might You Like to Try?
Teacher (What is the teacher doing?)				
Evidence of Gradual Release				
Student Engagement (What are the students doing?)				
Materials				
Environment				
Assessment (How do you know the students are getting it?				

Layered Coaching. Mentoring New Teachers (2007). Allen, J. Maine. Choice Literacy.

APPENDIX E

Action Research Plan

Name:

Date:

Subject:

Grade Level:

1. What is a problem or issue related to classroom instruction and student/learning/achievement that you would like to address and study?

2. What new practice or intervention do you want to implement into your classroom to address this issue or challenge?

3. What does current research on this new practice or intervention suggest?

4. How will you measure and determine effectiveness of introducing this new practice or strategy into your classroom?

Instructional Coaches and the Instructional Leadership Team (2012). Spaulding, D. & Smith, G. Thousand Oaks, California. Corwin Press.

APPENDIX F

Recommended Resources for Coaching

Books

- *The Literacy Coach: Guiding in the Right Direction* (Enrique A. Puig, Kathy S. Froelich)
- *Coaching Conversations: Transforming Your School One Conversation at a Time* (Linda Gross Cheliotes, Marceta Fleming Reilly)
- *Differentiated Coaching (Jane Kise)*
- *Leading the Co-teaching Dance (Wendy Murawski and Lisa Dieker)*
- *Unmistakable Impact (Jim Knight)*
- *Instructional Coaching article:* 8 factors
- *Protocols for Professional Learning Conversations* (Catherine Glaude)
- *Content-Focused Coaching*(Lucy West)
- *Choice Literacy* (Jennifer Allen)
- *Instructional Coaches and the Instructional Leadership Team* (Dean Spaulding, Gail Smith)
- *Teaching Matters Most* (Thomas McCann, Alan Jones, Gail Aronoff)
- *Cultivating a Math Coaching Practice* (Amy Morse)
- *Empowering the Mentor of the Beginning Mathematics Teacher* (NCTM)
- *A Guide to Mathematics Coaching* (Ted Hull, Don Balka, Ruth Harbin Miles)
- *The Math Coach Field Guide* (edited by Carolyn Felux, Paula Snowdy)

Journals and Articles

- National Journal of Staff Development
- *Studying the Impact of Instructional Coaching* (Jim Knight and Jake Cornett) (Kansas Coaching Project at the Center for Research on Learning)
- *Research on Coaching* (Jim Knight and Jake Cornett)
- *Instructional coaching: eight factors for realizing better classroom support, feedback and intensive, individualized professional learning* (Jim Knight)
- *Instructional Coaching* (Annenberg Institute for School Reform: Professional Development Strategies that Improve Instruction)
- *Coaching as Leadership* (Lucy West)
- *Coaching Considerations: FAQs Useful in the Development of Literacy Coaching* (Douglas Fisher)

Other

- *NB Literacy Coaching Modules* (available at Education Centres)

APPENDIX G

Additional Considerations in Implementing a Coaching Model

The Role of the Principal

The principal is key in facilitating coaching relationships among educators. In one study examining the relationship between principal leadership and successful implementation of coaching (Matsumara, Sartoris, Bickel and Garnier, 2009), the findings call for strong leadership actions:

- Principals need to publicly state support for the role of the coach
  - teachers who reported being observed more frequently by their coach implemented new instructional strategies at a higher rate than colleagues; coaches observed teachers more frequently when principals explicitly stated that the coach was there to support improved instruction

- Principals must observe coaches in action
  - principals who reported more frequent observing of coaches in classrooms understood the coach's role better and as such, minimized requests for administrative tasks that infringed on the coach working with teachers

Additional findings (Mastsumara, Garnier and Resnick, 2010) indicate further insights into the critical role of the principal when implementing coaching:

- Schools that exhibited the most improvement in instructional practice reported principals who:
  - actively participate in professional learning with the coach
  - endorse the coach to teachers
  - respect the coach's professional judgment in determining their schedule

"No matter how much a coach knows, and no matter how effective a coach is, the principal's voice is ultimately the one most important to teachers" (Jim Knight, 2006). The principal is the instructional leader and must fully support coaching activities.

Implementation

Coaching will be site-based and provide job-embedded professional learning that is differentiated to meet the needs of the school. The coach adjusts interactions with individuals, small-groups, and larger groups to support development in one or more of the following key areas:

Interactions	School/Classroom Environment/ Transitions	Content	Instruction/UDL/ Differentiation	Formative Assessment
Consult				
Collaborate				
Coach				

Mechanisms to Ensure Success

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to supporting the ongoing growth of the coach. Therefore, additional learning opportunities will be made available to those in the role of Education Support Teacher.

- A plan for the professional learning and development of the EST includes:
  - Coaching practices (e.g., steps in the framework, communication, relationship building)
  - Teaching practices (e.g., formative assessment, UDL, content knowledge)
  - Building capacity in focus areas based on curriculum and research and aligned with improvement initiatives.
- Structures within the school to support successful coaching opportunities:
  - Adequate planning time for teaching teams and the coach
  - Adherence to the role
  - Working closely with the instructional leaders in the school
  - Meeting space outside of the staffroom

How Do We Measure the Impact of Coaching?

To measure the impact of coaching, the following methods can be used:

- Interviews: select a sample of school sites (principal, teachers, and coach).
- Observations using a Coaching "Look Fors" document; attached to this could be a check-list or rating scale.
- System-wide survey involving all professional learning teams that have a coach on staff. (see http://www.instructionalcoach.org/images/downloads/tools/coaching_survey2.1.pdf)
- Reflective Working Notebook between the teacher and coach—bring these to the conversation. Both teacher and coach to bring one. For a reflection tool example, see http://www.instructionalcoach.org/images/downloads/forms/afterAction.pdf
- Action Research* (Example: Two teachers want to improve questioning techniques. One teacher has access to a coach, the other doesn't. Measure pre and post comprehension.) *See Appendix B
- In class observations* and interviews with students. * See Appendix C

Evidence Sources

There are a variety of data sources, which include the following:

- The Principal
- Teacher
- Student
- Coach
- Parent/Guardian

Categories of Impact

The impact of coaching is measured through analyzing the following categories:

- Instructional Practice
    - Curriculum (content)
    - Instruction
    - Assessment

- Student Achievement
    - Classroom data
    - School-based data
    - District and provincial data

- Coach Development
    - Professional Relationships
    - Data and Evidence
    - Substantive Conversation
    - Purposeful Instruction
    - School Improvement
    - Self-Development

- Overall School Alignment
    - SIP/ Provincial Goals
    - Professional Learning
    - Instructional Resources