Coaching for Success:
Get Ready (Learning Targets)
Get Set (Intentional Listening)
Go! (Feedback)

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Coaches Make a Difference

Coaching has potential to shape effective classroom practices

- Educational coaching, like formative assessment, is linked with increased student scores and greater teacher satisfaction
- Interactions between coaches and teachers parallel many 'best practices' interactions between teachers and students

Coaches often take different roles and each role has importance

- Cheerleader
- Guide
- Mentor
- Critical Friend
- Collaborator
- Co-teacher
- Advocate
- Facilitator of PLCs
- Liaison: Teachers to Administrators

Successful coaches possess experiences that are valuable

- Knowledge of mathematics and pedagogical content knowledge
- Knowledge of how people learn – adults as well as students
- Skills in working with other adults
- Flexibility to make adjustments to meet the different needs of others

Coaching for success requires knowledge of content

Successful coaches possess…

- Knowledge of mathematics and pedagogical content knowledge
  - They learn even as they teach
  - They continually read, study, and observe
- Knowledge of how people learn
  - By seeing, hearing, touching and doing
  - By self-assessing and planning, building on experiences, seeing relevance, engaging in discussions and reflection

Coaching for success requires skills and flexibility

Successful coaches also possess…

- Skills in working with other adults
  - They establish a positive environment for collaboration
  - They don't try to "fix" teachers
- Flexibility to make adjustments to meet needs of different colleagues
  - Adults' experiences often instill biases

Common key features help define effective classroom coaching

- Mutual respect and trust
- Desire to support student learning
- A purpose and goals for interactions
- Collaboration rather than evaluation

After NCSM 2016, what?

Coaching Suggestion:Reinforce these powerful, under-utilized practices

- Develop **clear learning targets**
- Plan for and practice **intentional listening**
- Craft **actionable feedback** that moves learning forward

Clear learning targets describe the desired destinations of lessons

- *Standards* identify broad unit or year-long goals and *learning progressions* offer guidance for planning *units* that organize content into groups of lessons
- *Learning targets are goals of daily lessons* – they are the desired student destinations

You remember the story about the little seahorse who went to seek his fortune…

The moral of the story is *"If you don't know where you are headed, you may end up someplace else and not even realize it."*

More specifically, learning targets may be defined as …

- Statements of what students are to learn and evidences of accomplishment
- Achievement expectations for students on the path toward mastery of larger goals and standards
- Evidence of what learning looks like
- Road maps for daily instruction

What's frequently lacking? Clarity about student outcomes

Teacher plans
• Activate activity: With partners students create Venn Diagrams to show what they remember about measures of center • Groups share: review how to identify and calculate mean, median, and mode • Do odd number problems on pg. 78; discuss student choices of measures for each situation

Coaches: Encourage teachers to focus more on learning targets

- *What type of knowledge and understandings do I want to focus on – facts, concepts, skills and procedures, reasoning and proof, problem solving and applications?*
- *Am I prepared to communicate to students what I expect?*

Coaches: Share questions such as these to clarify learning targets

- What do you expect students to learn?
- How are they going to learn it?
- How will you know when they have learned it?
- How will they know when they have learned it?
- How will you respond when they don't?
- How will you respond when they do?

Coaches: Help teachers relate lesson plans to student outcomes

Teacher's plans	Student outcomes
• Activity to activate prior knowledge - students create Venn Diagrams relating measures of center • Groups share Venns; review terms and how to calculate mean, median, and mode • Do odd numbers pg. 78; discuss student choices, justifications	• Students share what they remember; define terms and processes • Students choose mean, median, or mode to interpret data in context and justify choice, explaining how different measures may lead to different conclusions from the same data

Coaches: Suggest teachers begin lesson plans with the end in mind

Student Outcomes	Teacher's planning
• What should students know and be able to do • Stated in student-friendly language • Includes mileposts and a view of how the learning target fits into a bigger mathematical picture	• Articulate learning targets; plan tasks, questions, homework • Decide how to introduce lesson • Determine flow of lesson • Decide assessment and/or closure

Turn and talk

- What opportunities are there in your schools to strengthen instruction and formative assessment by articulating clear learning targets for daily lessons that are richer than simply listing the standard?
- How can the practice of clearly defining outcomes (learning targets) strengthen your own work?

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Intentional listening begins with thinking about what to listen for

- Intentional listening goes beyond focusing on whether answers are correct or incorrect
- Intentional listening happens when teachers are actively working to make sense of what students are saying

Plan for and practice intentional listening throughout instruction

Intentional listening happens

- As students are working
- During group and class discussions
- When following up on student work
- In one-on-one student interviews

Intentional Listening happens as students are working

- *What vocabulary do I want or need to hear?*
- *What explanations are important?*
- *What evidence of understanding am I listening for as students talk with each other?*
- *What influence may clear learning targets have on conversations?*

Intentional Listening happens during group and class discussions

- Listening to understand often results in asking students to clarify, "*Say a bit more*" or "*Please elaborate*"
- Wait time becomes essential
- Teachers talk less, but listen more

Coaches: Consider talking through potential misconceptions

- Planning helps teachers be more prepared to listen for misconceptions, common errors, or unproductive paths
- For example, If a student says 86 is the median in this set of data (56, 86, 75),
  - Did student just forget to order data?
  - Does student not know data must be ordered?

Coaches: Reinforce importance of environment to support discussion

- Student mistakes mean they haven't learned something yet; teachers need to probe to uncover thinking
- Intentional listening includes asking questions to clarify thinking behind both incorrect and correct answers

Intentional Listening happens during follow-up of student work

- Focus is on understanding student's thinking; often will be a 2-3 minute desk-side conversation as others are working
- Allows teachers to probe specific issues
- Provides support for students having difficulties

Intentional Listening happens in one-on-one student interviews

- Difficult to schedule, but usually revealing
- Sample three or four from classes
- Opportunity to probe: ex., is a procedure memorized but not clearly understood or can student tell how *y* and *n* are related in the equation

Students do apply algorithms - their own as well as standard

49	53	18	38
14	19	26	78
26	47	34	27
+32	+18	+55	+19
112	137	133	153

- Student's dilemma: Why are some marked wrong and some are correct when I did the same thing each time?

Coaches: Encourage teachers to prepare questions ahead of time

- While making lesson plans or reviewing student work, write questions specific to the mathematics
- Avoid giving away too much information in wording the questions
- Note key ideas that indicate understanding

Coaches: Observing "body language" goes with intentional listening

- Listening intentionally and observing body language give real time feedback about student understanding that allows teachers to make in-the-moment adjustments to instruction
- Helps teachers provide interventions before misconceptions become habits

Pause and ponder

- How can the practice of listening intentionally strengthen your own work with colleagues?
- What opportunities are there in your schools to strengthen instruction and formative assessment by focusing greater attention on listening more carefully to students?

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Actionable feedback is about the student's work - not the student

- Actionable feedback helps students understand what part of their work is correct, what needs work, and how changes in their thinking might happen
- It inform students about where they are in the process of moving from "not knowing" to "being proficient" with mathematics content

Actionable feedback provides ways students can improve work

- Students become more self-sufficient as feedback highlights work well done so that it can be replicated or points to areas of weakness
- Grades are a form of feedback that is evaluative but gives no indication of how to improve work

Actionable feedback to class or students may take several forms

- There is not "one right way" to provide feedback to students
- Much feedback is oral - to the class or small groups or to individuals
- It's often given in the form of questions to focus or refocus a student's attention or encourage the student to rethink a mistake

Actionable feedback is best when it is specific to the task or situation

- Feedback written/given to individuals is likely to be the most critical
- Best when suggests a pathway for the student to rethink and correct the error
- Guides student thinking but does not replace student thinking with the teacher's thinking

Exit cards, one-item assessments open the door to group feedback

- Exit cards, one-item assessments and strategies like “My Favorite No” provide opportunities for teachers to point out more productive pathways or for students to be resources for each other
- Discussions about specific mathematics move learning forward as students compare their responses (no names!)

Feedback that is helpful but not directive is hard to craft

- *Remember to line up the decimal points before adding or subtracting* (helpful but directive)
- *How can you use what you know about place value to determine if your answer to the task makes sense?* (less directive)

Feedback that is helpful but not directive is hard to craft

Student correctly computes areas of square and circle but starts with incorrect values

- The formulas are correct, but how did you decide what numbers to substitute in the formulas?

Student has errors in work

- Four of the solutions are incorrect; find these problems and correct them

Coaches: Encourage discussions about actionable feedback

- Most of us need practice giving actionable feedback; when answers are incorrect, we need to guide without directing
- Examining student work with colleagues is an opportunity to plan feedback
- Our goal is to guide and support the development of students' mathematical thinking – not just to have students get correct answers

Encourage "feedforward" to inform learning, responsibility

- Use "feedforward" to alert students to what needs attention (*be sure to label*) or to what they need to think about (tomorrow's lesson is on symmetry)
- But be careful to avoid shortcuts that become rote practices without understanding

Get ready, Get set, and Go!
Consider these powerful practices

- Develop **clear learning targets**
- Plan for and practice **intentional listening**
- Craft **actionable feedback** that moves learning forward

Selected Resources

- Edwards, Jenny. Cognitive Coaching[SM]: A Synthesis of the Research http://www.thinkingcollaborative.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Cognitive_Coaching_Fastback_Rev_January_2014-1.pdf
- Joyner, Jeane M. and George W. Bright, *INFORMative Assessment Practices to Improve Mathematics Achievement, Middle and High School*. Math Solutions (Learning Targets Chpts. 2-3; Intentional Listening Chpt. 4, Feedback Chpts. 7 and 9)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles to Actions, Ensuring Mathematical Success for All*
- National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, JUMP START modules, https://www.mathedleadership.org/resources/jumpstart/index.html
- Wiliam, Dylan, *Embedded Formative Assessment*. Solution Tress Press

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