

C H A P T E R

7

**BUILDING
INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP**





CHAPTER 7: BUILDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

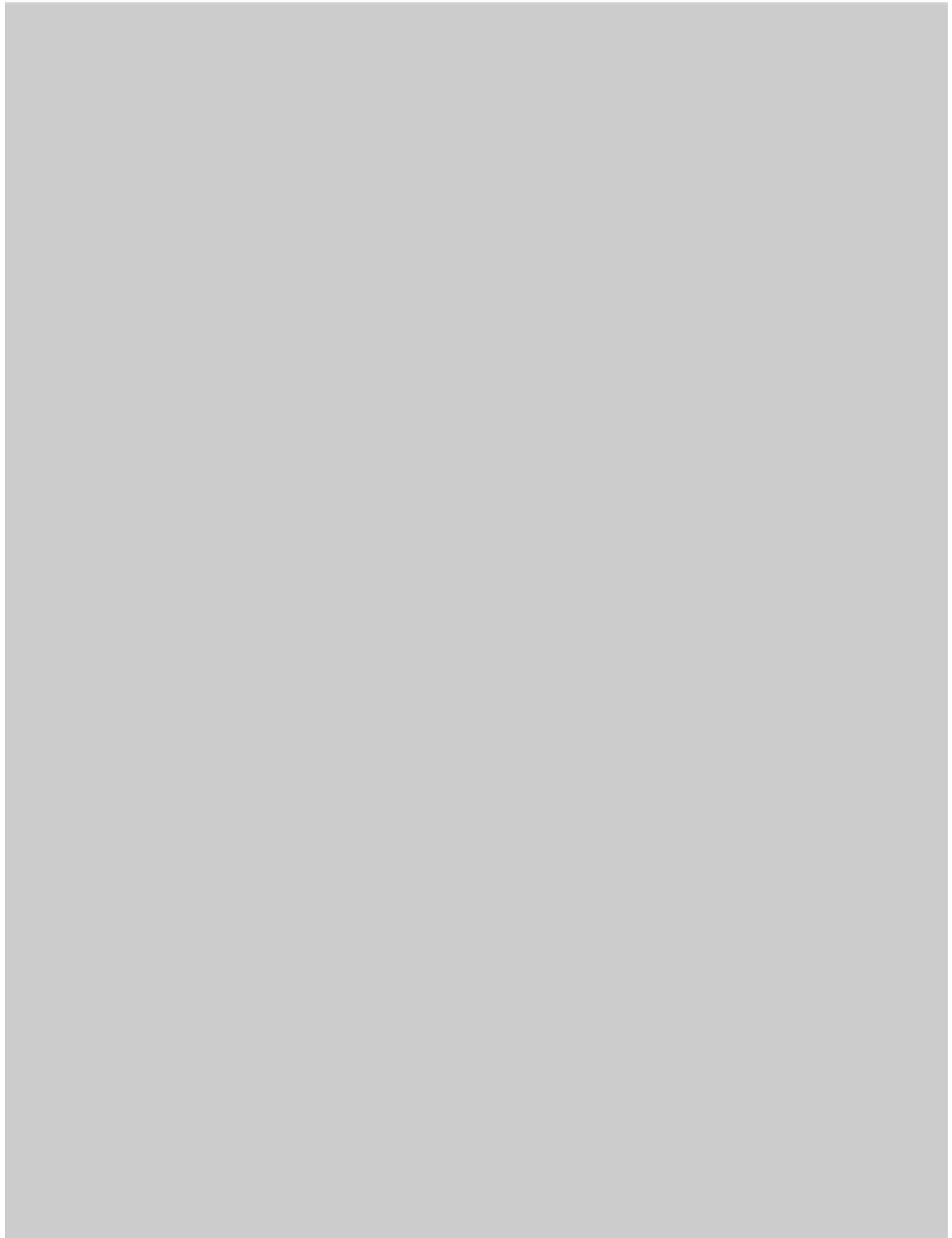
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**OBJECTIVE**

Reading coaches will promote collaborative relationships at the district and school levels and build collaborative cultures to improve the implementation of scientifically based instructional reading practices and programs.

WHERE DOES INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP THRIVE?

Imagine a school culture where authentic learning thrives for all members of the school and its surrounding, extended community. The climate is invigorating and purposeful. When troubles surface, the truth is heard, the brutal facts are confronted, and changes are made in the name of service to students and a genuine commitment to do the right thing. An air of safety prevails. Staff and students can admit to not knowing and making mistakes because trust permeates relationships among individuals within the school community.

Some call these places collaborative cultures; a principal may call this a school's vision. You know this culture does not just evolve. Creating this healthy learning environment grows from concerted, collective action, exerted by concerned individuals who are committed to making a difference for every student.

The principal dreams of a school where efforts are driven by data, actions characterized by teamwork, and practices grounded in research. The coach longs to celebrate successes publicly and for these positive initiatives to drive future actions. Both of them know that the collective endeavors of a collaborative culture can change workplaces and lives (Robbins, 2006).

Right now, however, the needs of the students at your school make you and the principal question the wait for a cultural revolution. Do you wait for the proverbial tide to turn or do you jump ship? Before you go to either extreme, let's assess your school's culture.



PROCESS & PRACTICE

School Culture Assessment (Resource 7.1)

Reflect on the statements below as they relate to the culture in your school. Check the **O** column if the activity is observable in the majority of classrooms in your school. Check the **D** column if the activity is developing, but is evident with at least half of your staff. Check the **A** column if the activity is absent from your school at this time.

O	D	A	All members engage in the study of learning.
O	D	A	Practitioners and members of the extended community are devoted genuinely to do whatever it takes to assure that student learning thrives.
O	D	A	Strategic activities are in place so that data can be studied, decisions made, and plans developed and monitored to attain desired results.
O	D	A	The analysis of teaching and learning is routine; collective inquiry and reflection are viewed as learning tools.
O	D	A	Structures are in place to provide learning options to students who demonstrate that conventional learning experiences are not producing desired results.
O	D	A	Resources are targeted to bring about desired results for student learning.
O	D	A	Success is celebrated in conjunction with documenting what contributed to that success.
O	D	A	Problems are regarded as opportunities to learn.
O	D	A	Trust and camaraderie exist among organizational members which allow them to take risks and share successful practices.
O	D	A	A collaboratively developed mission statement and vision emphasize creating and structuring success for all learners.
O	D	A	Leadership is shared.
O	D	A	The principal models being a learning leader.
O	D	A	Learning is embedded in meetings, professional development, supervisory visits, and casual conversation.
O	D	A	Teamwork is common practice; the focus is on learning.
O	D	A	Norms govern meetings and place learning at the center of all activity.
O	D	A	The school culture is collaborative, student-focused, and results-oriented.
O	D	A	Students are viewed as valuable sources of qualitative, informal data regarding the quality of the work and the workplace environment.
O	D	A	The school's physical structure is inviting and celebrates student learning and staff success.
O	D	A	Funding and time are allocated for professional development and learning.
O	D	A	All stakeholders truly believe each student can learn.

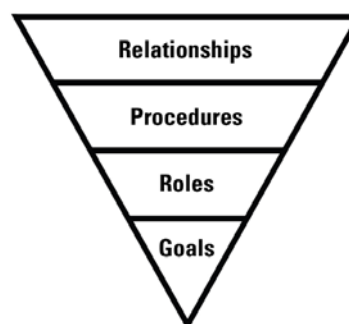
Adapted from *Presentation to the Florida Association for Staff Development*, by P. Robbins, 2006.

Educator Roland Barth (2002, p. 8) supports the priority of an educational community: “Four years of public school teaching—and ten years as a principal—convince me that **the nature of relationships among adults who inhabit a school has more to do with a school’s quality and character, with the accomplishments of its pupils and the professionalism of its teachers than any other factor.**”

McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) found that **differences in successful and unsuccessful schools in terms of achievement, attendance, and dropout rates were directly attributable to the presence of a context of professional community among teachers.** Whether at the department level, the school level, or the district level, the most effective teachers had joined a network of professionals who addressed problems and found solutions together. When applied to the model on the left, goals of achievement, attendance, and graduation are at the top, but the relationships form the foundation for a school's peak performance.



Imagine the instability if the triangle were inverted, as in the model on the right. This school puts its goals first but teeters precariously under the weight of the roles, procedures, and relationships necessary to achieve those goals.



As Peterson and Deal (2002) summarize: successful performance depends on relationships, efforts to save all students, and a shared sense of responsibility for learning.



PROCESS & PRACTICE

Cultural Close-Up (Resource 7.2)

Brainstorm some positive cultural characteristics that you believe foster quality teaching and learning in your school. Consider cultural aspects that could hinder quality teaching and learning in your school. Begin reshaping those characteristics by noting your ideas below. Refer to the School Culture Assessment (Resource 7.1) for ideas in both categories.

	Celebrations	Expectations	Facilities	Heroes and Heroines	Routines
Positive Characteristics That Foster Learning					
Negative Characteristics That Hinder Learning					

WHAT IF THE PRINCIPAL IS JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE?

Unfortunately, some schools teem with combative cultures and are filled with people who hate their work, treat colleagues poorly, and criticize the school to others. Relationships are characterized by distrust, with new ideas and information hidden from others. If innovative strategies find use, it is behind the closed door of a classroom. Recognition is based on politics and priorities are established by what will serve personal needs first and student needs later (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

Unlike schools with collaborative cultures, these schools are stuck. There is little attachment among colleagues since the norm is of self-reliance (Rosenholtz, 1989). A numbing sameness weighs heavily on the learning environment. Innovators either fall victim to this fatalism or seek another work setting.

If a leader is committed to change the school culture from combative to collaborative, simply inviting this staff to work together may be ineffective. Relationships typically begin with conversations. Some suggest that **a culture is really a network of conversations**. In a positive culture those conversations are productive and lead to professional growth and improved student achievement. In a negative culture, if conversations occur, they typically concern “*nondiscussables*.”

Again, Roland Barth (2002, p. 8) reflects:

*The health of a school is inversely proportional to the number of nondiscussables; the fewer nondiscussables, the healthier the school, the more nondiscussables, the more pathology in the school culture. Nondiscussables are subjects sufficiently important that they are talked about frequently or are so laden with anxiety and fearfulness that these conversations take place only in the parking lot, the restrooms, the playground, the carpool, or the dinner table at home. Fear abounds that open discussion of these incendiary issues—at a faculty meeting, for example—will cause a meltdown. **To change the culture of the school, the instructional leader must enable residents to name, acknowledge, and address the nondiscussables—especially those that impede learning.***

A place for the principal to begin in building a collaborative culture may be to support the conversations by structuring time, a location, and policies that support the time staff invests in their conversations. By modeling active listening, setting aside assumptions while in the conversations, trying to understand each other's comments, and making meaning of them, the principal also attends to participants' emotional and interpersonal needs and skills.

Progress in culture development may be gauged by recognizing the references in conversations as noted in the chart below.

Collaborative Conversations	Combative Conversations
Teachers refer to instructional competencies when describing their expertise	Teachers refer to person, social, and managerial competencies when describing their expertise
Ambitious goals for student achievement	Goals centered on adult needs and adult values
Clear, well-articulated vision	Little sense of direction
Clear sense of direction that can be stated in a few crisp sentences	Focus on maintaining order and tranquility
Enthusiasm and “can do” attitude	Piecemeal management of programs
Spends time on what matters most in their priorities (role modeling)	Look for compliance, not results
Creates a sense of purpose, generates expectations, commitment	Lack common understanding of goals
Links activities to overarching goals	Lack common understanding of activities
Goals are focused on student achievement	Goals focus on ensuring a “smooth running” school

**PROCESS & PRACTICE****I Don't Want to Talk About It!**

Reflect on your school. What are some nondiscussables? What steps might you take to get these topics out in the open?

WHAT IS THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN BUILDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

It is difficult for a principal to focus on the business of school when he or she is bombarded by negativity. If the school's combative culture has been passed down through multiple administrations, the current principal's efforts may be met with the group's only consensus: "You, too, won't last." Trying to trace the beginnings of the combative culture may be impossible. Understanding that this culture may have started as the result of feeling unsupported provides a better base of operation.

The principal's role, then, is to provide that support and start building instructional leadership. **Teachers who feel enabled to succeed with students are more committed and effective than those who feel unsupported in their learning and in their practice** (Haggstrom, Darling-Hammond, & Grissmer, 1988; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Rosenholtz, 1989). A supportive environment stimulates good interpersonal relationships, fostering a continuous desire to implement change for improved student outcomes. Instructional leadership teams also build collegiality and positive relationships among coworkers based on a shared vision, common goals, and open communication.

By building instructional leadership, principals empower teachers to do what they do best—instruct students. In some schools, the instructional leadership team comes first and suggests coaching as a model to provide support. In other schools, the coach can assist the principal by suggesting the formation of an instructional leadership team. For the purpose of *Leading for Reading* our focus will be on a reading leadership team.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO GET THE READING LEADERSHIP TEAM OFF TO A GOOD START?

To implement an effective reading leadership team, a school administrator's knowledge base is vital. As a leader of a local educational community, the principal must attain basic knowledge of scientifically based reading research that serves as the foundation for instruction throughout a school. The coach is the most immediate resource for this information.

Administrators must attain an understanding of the five essential reading components, the reading process, and a variety of instructional assessments in order to communicate expectations as a leader clearly, and to allocate resources for reading effectively. Further, an administrator's management skills affect instructional expertise, instructional design, learning opportunities, and ultimately, student reading proficiency.

An administrator of an effective reading program establishes and maintains reading as a schoolwide priority. Reading is the requisite skill for student success in all subject areas and it remains a requisite skill through a lifetime. An administrator's commitment to reading as a schoolwide priority is vital to the entire school's reading success. The principal should ensure that professional development and teacher evaluation focus on reading.

To ensure positive reading outcomes, an administrator must monitor student reading gains, provide help to those not making sufficient progress, and support ongoing professional development. Selecting, developing, and retaining the highest quality instructional staff is achieved through ongoing professional development and evaluation processes based on recommendations and standards of the National Staff Development Council (NSDC).

The indicators of a principal's success in ensuring that professional development and evaluation processes are reading-focused include:

- The principal's active participation in initial and follow-up reading professional development activities with teachers (e.g., action research, study groups, etc.) that support the NSDC recommendations and standards;
- The teacher professional development plan focuses on reading improvement and creating a climate where all teachers are accountable for reading achievement gains schoolwide;
- Summative and formative feedback to teachers focuses on reading;
- Principals are knowledgeable about adult learning theory, change processes, and school culture, and are able to organize and implement effective staff development processes;
- Principals can connect research to practice; and
- Instructional design with evidence of effective practices from reading research and classroom assessment to produce positive student reading gains.

To ensure positive reading outcomes, school administrators must provide funding and other necessary resources for an effective reading program for all students. The principal's decisions about time, funding, and other resources affect both the quality and quantity of reading resources available for delivery of effective reading instruction. Extra support is arranged for teachers when students' progress is insufficient. This extra support is promptly provided upon first detection of reading difficulties.

A principal's success in allocating resources is indicated by:

- Resources are clearly dedicated to the achievement of reading mastery for all students;
- The necessary resources (time, funding, personnel, staff development, etc.) are identified, allocated, and managed to increase reading achievement for all students;
- External funding sources are pursued to support reading;
- Academic learning time in reading is appropriate in duration and substance to meet all learners' individual needs;
- Vertical and horizontal reading curriculum planning maps are established and implemented across and between grade levels and feeder patterns;
- The school organization provides the structures (planning time, teaching teams, etc.) necessary to allow teachers to meet reading achievement goals; and
- The administrator is aware of and uses research-based criteria in selecting curricular materials.

Hiring a coach is a major investment of resources. Few school districts have made an investment in coaching as extensive as that made by Boston Public Schools. In 2003, as Boston entered its ninth year of coaching, the commitment to 83 literacy coaches resulted in a \$7 million annual expenditure. Cathleen Kral, instructional leader for literacy and director of literacy coaching, describes the successes as mind-boggling. The difference is evident in the teacher conversations, heard around the building, that focus on instruction (Richardson, 2004).

Let's hear some details from principals on the benefits of the coaching model to them, their school, and their students.



WATCH A VIDEO CLIP

How does having a reading coach benefit you? Your school? Your students?

Make a note of each benefit mentioned. After the clip, prioritize the benefits based on your school.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Benefits will vary, of course, with the quality of the coach and the structure of the coaching model. The following checklist can help a principal's plan to prompt the best return on the investment.

Planning Checklist for Implementing the Coaching Model (Resource 7.3)

Who	When	Tasks to Be Accomplished
		Ensure that the reading coach is an experienced reading teacher who is highly knowledgeable about SBRR, the essential reading components, state standards, adopted reading programs and assessments, and who possesses good people-oriented skills (communication, flexibility).
		Communicate the district's reading plan, including the administration's support of the coaching process, with teachers, staff, and the community.
		Establish the reading coach's roles and responsibilities from the outset in a written format and ensure that everyone—including the coach, principals, and teachers—understands them.
		Determine how the reading coach's job performance will be evaluated.
		Address issues of evaluation and confidentiality with teachers directly from the outset. Ensure that the school climate promotes a non-threatening atmosphere where teachers can participate in learning and work with the reading coach.
		Ensure that the reading coach is not assigned inappropriate duties that interfere with coaching (e.g., substitute teaching, lunchroom duty, evaluation of staff).
		Ensure that K–3 schedules set aside time for teachers and the reading coach to work together. Schedules include an uninterrupted block of reading instruction with additional time for intervention. Protect reading instructional time from disruption.
		Ensure that the reading coach receives the necessary training to provide on-site coaching effectively and confidently.
		Ensure that school administrators are knowledgeable about SBRR and instructional practices so they can visit classrooms regularly and engage with teachers and reading coaches about effective instructional practices and student learning.
		Develop a year-to-year plan for implementing the coaching process.
		Create a coaching schedule that reflects the reading coach's roles and responsibilities and allows sufficient time to work with individual teachers, grade-level teams, and K–3 teams. ___ Conferences ___ Observations ___ Teacher study groups ___ Demonstrations ___ Grade-level meetings
		Conduct initial meetings with K–3 teachers and instructional staff to orient them to the reading coach's roles and responsibilities.
		Develop a management system for organizing the coaching process (including forms, checklists).
		Identify areas in the reading program that may need to be supplemented.
		Organize and conduct assessment data collection.
		Review assessment data to identify and group students who need intervention, to inform instruction, and to determine professional development needs.
		Integrate state standards/benchmarks in the instructional process.

Adapted from "The Changing Role of the Reading Specialist in School Reform," by J. A. Dole, 2004, *The Reading Teacher*, 57, 462–471; *Coaching: A Strategy for Developing Instructional Capacity: Promises and Practicalities*, by B. Neufeld and D. Roper, 2003; and *Institute on Beginning Reading: Mentor Coach Checklist*, by D. C. Simmons, E. J. Kame'enui, H. Fien, and B. Harn, 2003.

How a coach works is as important as what a coach knows. An effective coach has to be a master teacher who is comfortable going into any classroom. To be welcome in these classrooms, the coach should display energy and a positive outlook, and be the kind of person that others enjoy being around. An effective coach learns the art of being “respectfully pushy.” **Most important, at the core, the coach needs to communicate a deep, honest belief in teachers,** even when communicating specific ways in which teachers might need to improve.

WHAT IS THE COACH'S ROLE IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

The principal greatly depends on the coach, who greatly depends on the teachers, to meet the school's reading goal. While all parties are aligned to goal achievement, each role varies. Fostering a clear distinction between these roles falls to the principal. The principal and coach should carefully establish their mutual expectations of the coach's role at the beginning of the school year. **The coach's non-evaluative, supportive position should be clearly described to teachers in order to create a positive environment for coaching and learning.**

To establish mutual expectations, conversations could begin using the Role Clarification Form, Resource 1.2 (on page PG 1.11). Hasbrouck & Denton (2005) suggested the conversations between the coach and principal focus on the:

- Rationale for implementing coaching at this school;
- Experiences of being a coach and/or supervising a coach;
- Task identification for the coach;
- Time allotment for the tasks identified for the coach; and
- Collaborative planning time to support the coaching process.

Another approach to establishing these expectations would be to agree on a coaching schedule. In these sample schedules, a reading coach spends 4.5 hours per day in one of four targeted grade levels and 3.5 hours planning, meeting, or conducting other duties.

Sample Coaching Schedule A

	Monday Grade K	Tuesday Grade 1	Wednesday Grade 2	Thursday Grade 3	Friday Grades K–3
8:00–1:00 <i>(includes lunch break)</i>	In the classroom (e.g., observing, demonstrating)	In the classroom (e.g., observing, demonstrating)	In the classroom (e.g., observing, demonstrating)	In the classroom (e.g., observing, demonstrating)	Appropriate duties (e.g., planning); make-up sessions with teachers
1:00–1:30	Planning				
1:30–2:00	Flexible time Leadership responsibilities, conferences with teachers (e.g., to discuss instruction or student progress, work with students, or conduct interventions)				
2:30–3:30	Grade-level meetings				

Format is adapted from *Leadership Team Notebook*, Alabama Reading Initiative, and Alabama Literacy Change Initiative, 2003.

In this sample schedule, the reading coach and principal agree on the tasks to be completed, understanding the time allocated may vary daily.

Sample Coaching Schedule B

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as an on-site, stable resource of PD, progress monitoring, and student data analysis • Provide on-site daily assistance for teachers and paraprofessionals by modeling instructional strategies • Work closely with new teachers and their mentors to ensure effective instruction is taking place in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First week of school, provide initial training for new teachers in the five components of reading, assessment, and intervention • Meet with teachers to monitor student progress, problem solve, give feedback • Provide data analysis to teachers to drive instructional decisions • Meet with grade-level groups to discuss/plan instructional strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide efficient, effective, and ongoing assessments to include screening, diagnostic testing, and progress monitoring for 100% of students reading below grade level • Facilitate the administration of progress monitoring assessments and assist teachers in the analysis of data • Meet with other reading coaches to share experiences with effective implementation of the reading program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop schedule detailing the yearly plan with a checklist • Review yearly data to determine gains for each grade level • Develop next year's reading plan

Adapted from Y. Lerner and P. Suggs (personal communication, 2004).

Effective coaching is a powerful tool that can inspire professional learning and improve teacher effectiveness. The reading coach can help foster change and improve implementation of SBRR instruction by:

- Attending professional development and meetings to enhance his or her own professional knowledge, skills, and expertise about effective reading instruction and SBRR;
- Scheduling grade-level team meetings a minimum of once per week for problem solving, data collection and review, sharing teaching methods, and determining teachers' needs for training and materials;
- Sharing information with teachers about overall school progress, plans, etc.;
- Scheduling times for one-on-one teacher conferences, demonstrations, observations, and other professional development to improve instruction;
- Ensuring that grade-level teams have opportunities to review current student data, to problem solve, and to discuss different classroom experiences with administrators;
- Developing and extending SBRR instructional practices presented during professional development. Research indicates that coaching can facilitate professional and collegial relationships and can help teachers transfer knowledge and skills from professional development sessions to classroom practice;
- Expecting and reinforcing high-quality instructional practices;
- Being persistent and patient as teachers implement new instructional strategies;
- Co-teaching and offering assistance when needed;

- Reducing teachers' anxiety by pairing teachers who are proficient in specific practices or skills with others who are still developing them;
- Maintaining confidentiality to protect coaching trust and credibility; and
- Meeting regularly with the principal and other members of the leadership team to coordinate support, share progress, and address areas of concern.

The successful coach encourages teachers to want to spend more time with him or her. More teachers will seek out the coach's help. A coach may need guidance from the principal about how to set coaching priorities so that there is a rational approach to allocating the coaches' resources.

The Reading Coach's Report to Principal form below may be a useful tool in regularly communicating those priorities. When shared with the staff during the introduction of the coaching model, teachers are reassured that personal identifying information will not be shared by the coach with the principal.



PROCESS & PRACTICE

Reading Coach's Report to Principal (Resource 7.4)

Coach: _____ Date: _____
 School: _____ Report Interval: _____

Indicate in the blank to the left if the item is Observable, Developing, or Absent on the last day of the reporting interval. Complete the plan of action with suggestions for follow-up in areas that are developing or absent.

KEY:

O: Observable: The activity is observable in the majority of classrooms in your school.

D: Developing: The activity is developing, but is evident in at least half of the classrooms.

A: Absent: The activity is absent from your school at this time.

Instructional Materials

- ___ 1. Teachers receive all necessary instructional materials on time.
- ___ 2. Teachers have adequate supplementary materials aligned with the reading program.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Instructional Time

- ___ 3. Agreed-upon instructional time is provided to all students every day.
- ___ 4. Agreed-upon additional instructional time is provided for students receiving intervention.
- ___ 5. Time is used efficiently throughout the day to maximize student engagement and participation.
- ___ 6. Students are provided effective instruction when teachers are absent.
- ___ 7. Instruction proceeds without disruptions from student tardiness or absenteeism.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Instructional Grouping, Placement, and Scheduling

- ___ 8. Criteria for placement and grouping of students are implemented in all classrooms.
- ___ 9. New students are quickly placed and grouped according to program procedures.
- ___ 10. Support is available to help teachers provide extra help to students when needed.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Assessment

- ___ 11. Classroom-based instructional assessments are being administered, and progress monitoring results are documented and used to inform instruction. Assessment information is readily available to coach.
- ___ 12. Solutions to problems (e.g., inadequate student progress) are being implemented, and their effectiveness monitored, with serious situations receiving priority.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Classroom Implementation

- ___ 13 Teachers are implementing SBRR programs and interventions effectively and by design.
- ___ 14. Teachers are implementing explicit and systematic instruction.
- ___ 15. Teachers are scaffolding instruction to meet individual students' needs.
- ___ 16. Teachers are monitoring student progress during instruction and making appropriate adjustments to ensure student mastery of standards/benchmarks.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Professional Development

- ___ 17. Scheduled professional development is occurring. Time is used effectively.
- ___ 18. Coach is able to use entire day productively, focusing on improving classroom reading instruction.
- ___ 19. There is adequate time for coach to meet with teachers to examine lesson effectiveness, pacing, student performance, and to plan follow-up sessions.
- ___ 20. Teachers are working collaboratively with coach, implementing suggestions to teach more efficiently and to solve problems.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Behavior Management

- ___ 21. Student behavior inside and outside the classroom is good. School environment is characterized by positive interactions.
- ___ 22. Teachers receive adequate support in dealing with difficult-to-manage students.
- ___ 23. Motivational mechanisms are in place and working effectively to encourage students to work hard, perform well, and read outside the school environment.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

School Climate

- ___ 24. Teachers communicate situations in which they require assistance or materials.
- ___ 25. Teacher behavior and actions indicate that they believe changes can result in higher levels of reading achievement.
- ___ 26. Student learning is not complicated by conflicting practices or approaches.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Despite the urgency of improving teaching and learning, it may take teachers several years to master what are fundamentally new and different instructional strategies, even when they are eager to apply what they are learning. Needless to say, the process will take even more time with teachers who are unwilling to change their practice or with teachers who need help with other aspects of their work, such as classroom management.

Administrators can manage expectations for coaching by acknowledging that deep changes in instruction take a long time. Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1983) cautions against giving up in the middle of the project. **The difference between success and failure is often just a matter of time.**

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE READING LEADERSHIP TEAM?

While the coach and principal are members of the reading leadership team, they are not expected to have all the answers. Their expertise combines with that of other members of the reading leadership team to create a synergy: ideas from people with various perspectives which produce higher quality ideas and better solutions to problems (Sparks, 1992). Team members accept specific roles and responsibilities to ensure that the reading plan is being implemented and monitored effectively.

For example, the coach plays an important role in giving classroom teachers direction and support as they implement and improve reading instruction; the assistant principal may be responsible for coordinating class schedules; and the program coordinator may work with the coach to plan and conduct on-site professional development. With each member playing such an important role, how should members be selected? One option would be for the principal to ask teachers to complete the following questionnaire to identify faculty members who are interested in serving on the reading leadership team.

Reading Leadership Team Questionnaire (Resource 7.5)

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Please answer the following questions to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in the implementation of our school's reading plan.

1. What can I do to improve school leadership in the area of reading?

2. How can I promote and instill in teachers the need for improvement and incorporation of SBRR practices and programs?

3. How can I foster positive relationships among teachers and with parents about reading?

4. What are some ways to help teachers understand the importance of collecting assessment data and using the results to inform reading instruction?

5. How can I promote continuous professional development in reading instruction for teachers and administrators?

6. How would I structure a school-based Reading Leadership Team to further address these questions?

Another tool would be to receive feedback on reading priorities compared with their perceived implementation in the school. Instructional leaders must have a clear vision of effective reading instruction and SBRR and must be able to recognize it when it occurs in the classroom. They also must be able to determine when reading instruction is not being implemented effectively. This enables them to identify a gap and communicate so that necessary changes and adjustments can be made to instruction and program delivery.

Use the Setting Priorities for Reading Instruction form below to assess your priorities for your school and reflect on how this information could be helpful in selecting reading leadership team members.

**PROCESS & PRACTICE****Setting Priorities for Reading Instruction (Resource 7.6)**

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Read each statement about scientifically based reading instruction and determine its priority by asking:

- What is its importance when teaching students to read at or above grade level? Rate from 1 to 5, with 5 as very high priority and 1 as very low priority.
- To what extent is it being implemented by teachers? Rate from 1 to 5, with 5 as clearly present and 1 as never present.

Importance when Teaching (Circle one)	Priorities for Reading Instruction	Extent of Implementation (Circle one)
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers focus instruction on the five essential components.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide differentiated instruction to address individual students' strengths and weaknesses.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Instruction is based on a comprehensive scope and sequence.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers plan and implement coordinated instructional activities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers use appropriate levels of student materials to match abilities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide ample practice opportunities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers monitor progress frequently.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers maximize student learning.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers pace lessons appropriately.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers minimize disruption and protect reading instructional time.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers emphasize small-group instruction.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide effective interventions for struggling readers.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Supplemental materials align with core reading instructional programs and materials.	5 4 3 2 1

**PROCESS & PRACTICE**

1. What conclusions can you draw from your ratings?

2. What areas need to be included in a reading action plan? Order by priority.

Select your three priority areas and suggest ways to reduce the gap between importance and implementation.

Priority 1:

Priority 2:

Priority 3:

Adapted from *Leadership Team Notebook*, Alabama Reading Initiative, and Alabama Literacy Change Initiative, 2003.

HOW WILL THE READING LEADERSHIP TEAM BE ORGANIZED?

The team continually reflects upon process and procedures as well as outcomes. Members of a reading leadership team typically include the principal, reading coach, and a teacher from each grade level or specialty. An assistant principal, program coordinator, superintendent, curriculum director, school psychologist, guidance counselor, librarian, speech therapist, and a parent could also be positive contributors. Depending on the goal, membership on the reading team may change.

The time commitment for membership involves a monthly meeting, its length varying according to the time of year. The agenda is jointly set by team members but is driven by the reading action plan goals.

The team may use information gathered from the team selection process to complete its first task—identifying a few clearly articulated, agreed upon, and measurable reading goals on which staff and resources are focused. The Coach's Learning Objectives Form (Resource 2.7) may provide a helpful structure in writing measurable goals. The reading goals are then expanded into a few coordinated objectives, each with an action plan and manageable scope.

In developing a course of action, leadership teams identify the steps necessary for implementing SBRR, determine who is responsible for what, and establish target dates for completion.

To help develop a course of action, reading leadership teams also need to ask:

- Do new policies and guidelines for implementing aspects of our reading programs, such as administering instructional programs, assessments, etc., need to be developed?
- Does the course of action include specific objectives?
- Are high expectations for both teachers and students established and clearly communicated?
- Have new staff positions and roles been clearly articulated?
- Has a collaborative decision-making system been established (e.g., scheduling meeting times for evaluating data, reading programs, and interventions)?
- Can teacher and program effectiveness be easily measured and evaluated?
- Are the objectives stated in measurable, behavioral terms?
- Is the course of action realistic? If not, how can it be broken down into smaller, manageable steps?
- Have programs, materials, space, professional development, and other resources been determined and procured?
- Is the course of action considered a high priority by everyone, including administrators, the reading coach, instructional staff, teachers, and parents?

After examining the reading plan at this level, the reading leadership team can communicate the goals more clearly. The leadership team gives teachers, students, parents, and the community a clear picture of the goals and expectations of improving student outcomes in reading. **Communicating the plan promotes a sense of instructional urgency, a need for change and improvement to ensure that all students are reading on or above grade level by the end of 3rd grade.**

Meeting the plan's goals will require all educational partners to compromise. Protecting the time devoted to reading instruction may call for a different approach to morning announcements, an alternative means of checking students in and out during this time, and a creative schedule for special areas. This involves overcoming resistance to change, including barriers and problems that arise. **Failure to align the schedule and school policies to the academic goals sends conflicting messages. Competing initiatives will reduce goal achievement.**

Susan Herli (2004) reflected on her experiences with a reading leadership team in the *Role of the Coach: Dream Keeper, Supporter, Friend*, published in the *Journal of Staff Development*:

...I recognized early on that I could not operate alone to facilitate the change process and address the multiple areas that needed improvement... Our principal, our external reform coach, and I identified the need for a team of teacher leaders to build the capacity of the reform effort and sustain the effort over time, particularly after external support waned. A teacher from each grade-level team applied for the job. These teacher leaders help create improvement on their teams as they take the lead to learn and improve themselves. I organize a meeting once a month for us to learn together and plan.

The reading leadership team continually monitors the progress toward reading goals. It oversees the collection of data about student progress toward grade-level standards, as well as teachers' knowledge, skills, and needs. Using assessment data to inform classroom instruction, to measure progress toward goals, to identify gaps, and to adjust instruction and program objectives to improve students' progress and outcomes, the team promotes schoolwide success. Leadership teams can foster changes that improve reading outcomes for all students. Effective instructional leadership can make a difference by clearly communicating reading goals, focusing on a plan of action, facilitating organizational support, providing continuous professional development and support in the classroom, monitoring progress, and promoting schoolwide and classroom accountability. Some examples of reading leadership team activities follow.

Reading Leadership Team

Activity Example 1—Beginning a Meeting

Agree to begin each reading team meeting by reflecting on these questions:

- How do we (as a group) respond when kids don't learn?
- Will we choose to adjust our response to students who are not learning, and if so, how?

Answer the questions as a team. Be brutally honest. Cite evidence to support your statements. List the top five responses and evidence to support those statements. While the reading leadership team will spend time in thoughtful reflection, resolving reading issues will also be a major focus.

Activity Example 2—Assessment Data Progress Update

Team/ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Old Business

1. Review data to determine students' progress over the past month.
2. What changes in our professional development and reading instruction have resulted in student improvement?

New Business

1. What do the data tell us about classroom instruction?
2. Are any students not making adequate progress? If so, what do we need to change in our teaching or professional development to improve student outcomes?
3. How are we monitoring these students' reading progress?
4. How can we collaborate to implement changes?

Activity Example 3—Team Problem-Solving

Use the problem-solving process addressed in Chapter 6. The cycle of problem identification, problem analysis, plan development, plan implementation and plan evaluation is illustrated below, showing time allocations for each step within a one hour meeting. The leadership team can select a time-keeper and a recorder to facilitate problem-solving within the time allotted.

Steps in Problem-Solving Process	Time Allocation (based on a 1 hour meeting)
Problem Identification What is the discrepancy?	15 minutes
Problem Analysis Why is this happening?	10 minutes
Plan Development What is the goal?	15 minutes
Plan Implementation How will the goal be met?	10 minutes
Plan Evaluation How will the plan be assessed?	10 minutes

HOW WILL THE WORK OF THE READING LEADERSHIP TEAM TRANSFER TO THE CLASSROOM?

Joyce and Showers (2002) see ways to transfer ideas from the reading leadership team to the general faculty through professional development that leads to student learning. Elmore (2000) advocates a design that increases student learning by connecting people to knowledge and skill development in their workplace and outside it, with the intent of bringing new knowledge back into the workplace. Fullan (2001) cites knowledge-building as one of the five purposes of effective leadership.

Professional development requires collaboration among administrators, teachers, and other staff members. Schools determine students' needs, select effective reading programs and interventions that address these needs. They provide training to enable teachers to deliver high-quality instruction, and they monitor student outcomes. The reading coach and other members of the leadership team need to set an example by refining and enhancing their own knowledge and skills related to effective reading instruction, programs, assessments, and SBRR.

They need to "know" reading programs, interventions, and supplementary materials. Instructional leaders need to attend the same professional development sessions that teachers attend, and to use the professional vocabulary that teachers are learning and using in their instruction. Use the following Reading Self-Assessment Survey to determine professional development needs of the reading leadership team or school staff. Information from the survey may also be used to write individual professional development plans.



PROCESS & PRACTICE

Reading Self-Assessment Survey (Resource 7.7)

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Administrators and other instructional leaders need ongoing professional development to develop and enhance their knowledge, skills, and expertise in effective reading instruction and SBRR. Answer the following questions to assess your professional development needs.

What two areas related to reading instruction and SBRR have you learned more about recently?

What two areas related to reading instruction and SBRR do you want to learn more about?

List specific professional development activities that would help foster your continued growth and understanding of effective reading instruction and SBRR.

Review your results with others on your team to coordinate an action plan for meeting professional development needs.

Building shared knowledge is a critical element in professional development, but shared knowledge will improve schools only when teachers apply that knowledge. The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning conducted several studies to assess whether or not coaching leads to implementation in schools. What is emerging from data is that coaching does indeed lead to implementation when the principal is supportive and the coach is qualified.

Well-constructed coaching programs have consistently generated implementation rates of at least 85%, with schools frequently getting every teacher on board to teach several interventions. Refer to the research by Joyce and Showers (1995) shown in the Professional Development Outcomes table in Chapter 2 (see page PG 2.9). A traditional inservice with no follow-up will likely result in no classroom implementation—quite a difference when compared to the coaching model.

Teachers reported that watching a reading coach in the classroom was very helpful, and strongly agreed that watching a reading coach made it easier for them to implement an instructional practice, increased their fidelity to the instructional model, increased their confidence, and enabled them to learn other teaching techniques. From the teachers' perspective, watching a coach in the classroom was an important part of professional learning (Knight, 2004).

The reading coach links professional development with classroom implementation. However, the coach not only promotes effective instructional practices through demonstration and observation, but also facilitates continuous learning through teacher meetings, peer coaching, action research, and professional learning communities.

HOW ELSE CAN A READING COACH FOSTER A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Teacher meetings with the coach may focus on assessment-driven instruction and student achievement. For example, during teacher meetings, the coach helps teachers use assessment data to monitor student progress and inform their reading instruction. The coach serves as a facilitator who promotes teacher collaboration through analyzing assessment data and discussing instructional effectiveness.

Teachers can also be given assignments that involve classroom implementation of instructional strategies and practices to address student needs. For example, a teacher is asked to use partner reading for two weeks with a newly formed group of struggling readers and then to share the results at the next meeting.

Peer coaching, or teachers coaching teachers, can extend the reading coach's efforts and sustain professional growth and reading improvement. Peer coaching helps classroom teachers become resources for one another by sharing the responsibilities for in-class support, guidance, and constructive feedback. As teachers observe and demonstrate lessons, offer feedback and guidance, and serve as coaches for other teachers, their knowledge, skills, and classroom implementation can improve.

Scientific thinking in practice occurs when teachers engage in action research. Action research is research into one's own practice that has, as its main aim, the improvement of that practice (Caro-Bruce, 2000). Action research consists of a defined plan of study in which the teacher documents what changes she will make and collects formal data on the resulting changes in students. Teachers may conduct action research as a part of a course of study for an advanced degree or for National Board Certification.

Professional learning communities are team-based groups made up of both teachers and administrators who work collaboratively to solve problems and provide high-quality instruction. Learning communities differ from grade group meetings or subject area planning groups. A learning community identifies new programs or topics to investigate, gathers research, studies the new approaches, implements and studies the effectiveness of the new strategy in the school, and shares its findings with the staff (Florida Department of Education, 2006).

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) recommends that every school become a learning community for teachers and other professionals it employs. This recommendation calls for educators to come together frequently to study and work collaboratively as a means of continuous improvement (NSDC, 2001).

As Hall and Hord observe (2006), everyone contributes to the community through:

- Shared values and vision of the staff's unwavering commitment to students' learning;
- Collective learning and application of strategies that address students' needs;
- Supportive and shared leadership that involves the staff in decision making;
- Supportive physical and human conditions that promote collaborative arrangements and relationships; and
- Shared feedback and assistance from peers that support individual and community improvement.

Results of active professional learning communities for teachers include:

- Reduced teacher isolation;
- Increased commitment to the school's mission and goals;
- Shared responsibility for the total development of students and their success;
- Creation of new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning;
- Higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and inspired to inspire students; and
- Greater satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism.

Results of active professional learning communities for students include:

- Lower rates of absenteeism;
- Greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading; and
- Smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds.

Let's hear from other coaches whose schools have active learning communities.



WATCH A VIDEO CLIP

What learning communities are currently active in your school?

Which learning communities would meet needs in your school at this time?

To review, there is too much for any one person to do to achieve and maintain an effective school. While the principal is ultimately responsible for building instructional leadership, that responsibility can be distributed for the benefit of the school. The reading leadership team, which includes the reading coach, provides an excellent resource for the principal dedicated to creating a positive learning culture.

The reading leadership team promotes schoolwide success by addressing:

- Full-scale implementation of instructional and intervention programs from day one through the final day of the school year;
- Ongoing professional development based on assessment data, state standards/benchmarks, the five essential reading components, and SBRR;
- Effective classroom management that maximizes student engagement in academic learning activities;
- High standards and expectations for all students;
- Implementation of a progress monitoring system to identify students who need intervention and teachers who need assistance, to track student progress, and to inform instructional decision-making; and
- Instructional priorities to ensure ALL students are making adequate gains in reading.

Because no two school cultures are identical, there is no one recipe for building instructional leadership. Whatever way your journey takes you, one thing awaits a school community that succeeds: a sense of satisfaction. Satisfaction, because there will be high levels of learning for staff and students; a perception of efficacy; a sense of collaborative support among staff, students, and parents, and the larger community; a revitalization of the workplace; recognition; and meaningful work.

WHAT IS THE DISTRICT'S (i.e., CENTRAL OFFICE'S) ROLE IN IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES?

Coaches without explicit formal and informal backing by school and district administrators struggle to succeed. Without district support, many principals hesitate to fully support a coach's efforts. The district, therefore, plays a vital role in improving student outcomes by establishing and supervising a system for effective implementation of the reading plan, whether it pertains to one school or many.

Because districts will use the assessment data to inform program decisions and provide targeted technical assistance, it is important that district-level reading personnel be well-trained in the interpretation and application of results from the selected assessments.

Districts assist in the role of improving reading achievement by establishing a system for:

- Communicating the state reading goals to the school, parents, and the community;
- Identifying standards-based instructional reading programs, interventions, and supplementary materials;
- Ensuring that reading personnel at all levels are knowledgeable about the reading programs and assessments;
- Coordinating professional development efforts, including federal, state, and local sessions;
- Meeting regularly with school instructional leadership teams to ensure fidelity of implementation of the reading plan;
- Managing data to inform decision making at both the school and classroom levels;
- Collaborating to use assessment data to adjust and modify existing programs and practices;
- Communicating the goals and the plan for improving reading instruction, including ongoing professional development through coaching, classroom visits, and assessment analyses; and
- Ensuring that the needs of all students are addressed.

LEARNING CENTERS

Make and Take Center

Coaching involves providing resources to assist teachers in effective reading instruction. Use this learning center time to create materials to add to your coaching collection.

Option A: Construct prompts to facilitate communication at reading leadership team meetings. Create bumper stickers or cartoon posters to post in the meeting as gentle reminders of the team's role and purpose.

Option B: What is your next scheduled school celebration? Celebrations are a way to build collaborative relationships, especially if they celebrate reaching reading achievement goals. Plan an activity to emphasize reading at the next school celebration.

Notes to self on Make and Take ideas for teachers:

Reflection Center

As you coach, you will ask many teachers to reflect on their instructional practices. Review each reflection prompt below, and record a response.

Option A: Who are the heroes and heroines at my school? Why? If none readily come to mind, what factors could be interfering with their recognition?

Option B: What are your nondiscussables as the reading coach at your school?

Notes to self on reflection prompts:

Technology Center

Websites offer information not covered in the *Leading for Reading Participant's Guide*. Visit the websites below to explore your interests in these topics. Bookmark these sites on your personal computer for future reference.

Option A: The Looking at Student Work website presents the work of educators committed to new ways of looking at student work—ways that emphasize:

- Teachers looking together at student work with colleagues;
- Focusing on small samples of student work;
- Reflecting on important questions about teaching and learning; and
- Using structures and guidelines ("protocols") for looking at and talking about student work.

www.lasw.org/welcome.html

Option B: The International Dyslexia Association promotes literacy through research, education, and advocacy.
<http://www.interdys.org>

Note to self on resources found at these websites:

Research Center

How many times have you wished for just a few quiet moments to review the latest reading research? Visit the website below for a downloadable book, *What Works in Elementary Schools: Results Based Staff Development* by Joellen Killion. Of particular interest would be Chapter 5 on literacy.

www.nsd.org/connect/projects/elwhatworks.pdf

Notes to self on what these findings mean for our school:

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CHAPTER 7: REPRODUCIBLE MASTERS

Resource 7.1 School Culture Assessment

Resource 7.2 Cultural Close-Up

***Resource 7.3 Planning Checklist for Implementing
the Coaching Model***

Resource 7.4 Reading Coach's Report to Principal

Resource 7.5 Reading Leadership Team Questionnaire

Resource 7.6 Setting Priorities for Reading Instruction

Resource 7.7 Reading Self-Assessment Survey

Master copies of the forms used in Chapter 7 follow.

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School Culture Assessment (Resource 7.1)

Reflect on the statements below as they relate to the culture in your school. Check the **O** column if the activity is observable in the majority of classrooms in your school. Check the **D** column if the activity is developing, but is evident with at least half of your staff. Check the **A** column if the activity is absent from your school at this time.

O	D	A	All members engage in the study of learning.
O	D	A	Practitioners and members of the extended community are devoted genuinely to do whatever it takes to assure that student learning thrives.
O	D	A	Strategic activities are in place so that data can be studied, decisions made, and plans developed and monitored to attain desired results.
O	D	A	The analysis of teaching and learning is routine; collective inquiry and reflection are viewed as learning tools.
O	D	A	Structures are in place to provide learning options to students who demonstrate that conventional learning experiences are not producing desired results.
O	D	A	Resources are targeted to bring about desired results for student learning.
O	D	A	Success is celebrated in conjunction with documenting what contributed to that success.
O	D	A	Problems are regarded as opportunities to learn.
O	D	A	Trust and camaraderie exist among organizational members which allow them to take risks and share successful practices.
O	D	A	A collaboratively developed mission statement and vision emphasize creating and structuring success for all learners.
O	D	A	Leadership is shared.
O	D	A	The principal models being a learning leader.
O	D	A	Learning is embedded in meetings, professional development, supervisory visits, and casual conversation.
O	D	A	Teamwork is common practice; the focus is on learning.
O	D	A	Norms govern meetings and place learning at the center of all activity.
O	D	A	The school culture is collaborative, student-focused, and results-oriented.
O	D	A	Students are viewed as valuable sources of qualitative, informal data regarding the quality of the work and the workplace environment.
O	D	A	The school's physical structure is inviting and celebrates student learning and staff success.
O	D	A	Funding and time are allocated for professional development and learning.
O	D	A	All stakeholders truly believe each student can learn.

Adapted from *Presentation to the Florida Association for Staff Development*, by P. Robbins, 2006.

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Cultural Close-Up (Resource 7.2)

Brainstorm some positive cultural characteristics that you believe foster quality teaching and learning in your school. Consider cultural aspects that could hinder quality teaching and learning in your school. Begin reshaping those characteristics by noting your ideas below. Refer to the School Culture Assessment (Resource 7.1) for ideas in both categories.

	Celebrations	Expectations	Facilities	Heroes and Heroines	Routines
Positive Characteristics That Foster Learning					
Negative Characteristics That Hinder Learning					

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Planning Checklist for Implementing the Coaching Model (Resource 7.3)

Who	When	Tasks to Be Accomplished
		Ensure that the reading coach is an experienced reading teacher who is highly knowledgeable about SBRR, the essential reading components, state standards, adopted reading programs and assessments, and who possesses good people-oriented skills (communication, flexibility).
		Communicate the district's reading plan, including the administration's support of the coaching process, with teachers, staff, and the community.
		Establish the reading coach's roles and responsibilities from the outset in a written format and ensure that everyone—including the coach, principals, and teachers—understands them.
		Determine how the reading coach's job performance will be evaluated.
		Address issues of evaluation and confidentiality with teachers directly from the outset. Ensure that the school climate promotes a non-threatening atmosphere where teachers can participate in learning and work with the reading coach.
		Ensure that the reading coach is not assigned inappropriate duties that interfere with coaching (e.g., substitute teaching, lunchroom duty, evaluation of staff).
		Ensure that K–3 schedules set aside time for teachers and the reading coach to work together. Schedules include an uninterrupted block of reading instruction with additional time for intervention. Protect reading instructional time from disruption.
		Ensure that the reading coach receives the necessary training to provide on-site coaching effectively and confidently.
		Ensure that school administrators are knowledgeable about SBRR and instructional practices so they can visit classrooms regularly and engage with teachers and reading coaches about effective instructional practices and student learning.
		Develop a year-to-year plan for implementing the coaching process.
		Create a coaching schedule that reflects the reading coach's roles and responsibilities and allows sufficient time to work with individual teachers, grade-level teams, and K–3 teams. ___ Conferences ___ Observations ___ Teacher study groups ___ Demonstrations ___ Grade-level meetings
		Conduct initial meetings with K–3 teachers and instructional staff to orient them to the reading coach's roles and responsibilities.
		Develop a management system for organizing the coaching process (including forms, checklists).
		Identify areas in the reading program that may need to be supplemented.
		Organize and conduct assessment data collection.
		Review assessment data to identify and group students who need intervention, to inform instruction, and to determine professional development needs.
		Integrate state standards/benchmarks in the instructional process.

Adapted from "The Changing Role of the Reading Specialist in School Reform," by J. A. Dole, 2004, *The Reading Teacher*, 57, 462–471; *Coaching: A Strategy for Developing Instructional Capacity: Promises and Practicalities*, by B. Neufeld and D. Roper, 2003; and *Institute on Beginning Reading: Mentor Coach Checklist*, by D. C. Simmons, E. J. Kame'enui, H. Fien, and B. Harn, 2003.

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Reading Coach's Report to Principal (Resource 7.4)

Coach: _____

School: _____ Report Interval: _____

Indicate in the blank to the left if the item is Observable, Developing, or Absent on the last day of the reporting interval. Complete the plan of action with suggestions for follow-up in areas that are developing or absent.

KEY

O=Observable: The activity is observable in the majority of classrooms in your school.

D=Developing: The activity is developing, but is evident in at least half of the classrooms.

A=Absent: The activity is absent from your school at this time.

Instructional Materials

___ 1. Teachers receive all necessary instructional materials on time.

___ 2. Teachers have adequate supplementary materials aligned with the reading program.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Instructional Time

___ 3. Agreed-upon instructional time is provided to all students every day.

___ 4. Agreed-upon additional instructional time is provided for students receiving intervention.

___ 5. Time is used efficiently throughout the day to maximize student engagement and participation.

___ 6. Students are provided effective instruction when teachers are absent.

___ 7. Instruction proceeds without disruptions from student tardiness or absenteeism.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

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Instructional Grouping, Placement, and Scheduling

- ☐ 8. Criteria for placement and grouping of students are implemented in all classrooms.
- ☐ 9. New students are quickly placed and grouped according to program procedures.
- ☐ 10. Support is available to help teachers provide extra help to students when needed.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Assessment

- ☐ 11. Classroom-based instructional assessments are being administered, and progress monitoring results are documented and used to inform instruction. Assessment information is readily available to coach.
- ☐ 12. Solutions to problems (e.g., inadequate student progress) are being implemented, and their effectiveness monitored, with serious situations receiving priority.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Classroom Implementation

- ☐ 13 Teachers are implementing SBRR programs and interventions effectively and by design.
- ☐ 14. Teachers are implementing explicit and systematic instruction.
- ☐ 15. Teachers are scaffolding instruction to meet individual students' needs.
- ☐ 16. Teachers are monitoring student progress during instruction and making appropriate adjustments to ensure student mastery of standards/benchmarks.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

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Professional Development

- ___ 17. Scheduled professional development is occurring. Time is used effectively.
- ___ 18. Coach is able to use entire day productively, focusing on improving classroom reading instruction.
- ___ 19. There is adequate time for coach to meet with teachers to examine lesson effectiveness, pacing, student performance, and to plan follow-up sessions.
- ___ 20. Teachers are working collaboratively with coach, implementing suggestions to teach more efficiently and to solve problems.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

Behavior Management

- ___ 21. Student behavior inside and outside the classroom is good. School environment is characterized by positive interactions.
- ___ 22. Teachers receive adequate support in dealing with difficult-to-manage students.
- ___ 23. Motivational mechanisms are in place and working effectively to encourage students to work hard, perform well, and read outside the school environment.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

School Climate

- ___ 24. Teachers communicate situations in which they require assistance or materials.
- ___ 25. Teacher behavior and actions indicate that they believe changes can result in higher levels of reading achievement.
- ___ 26. Student learning is not complicated by conflicting practices or approaches.

Plan of action for areas in need of follow-up:

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Reading Leadership Team Questionnaire (Resource 7.5)

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Please answer the following questions to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in the implementation of our school's reading plan.

1. What can I do to improve school leadership in the area of reading?

2. How can I promote and instill in teachers the need for improvement and incorporation of SBRR practices and programs?

3. How can I foster positive relationships among teachers and with parents about reading?

4. What are some ways to help teachers understand the importance of collecting assessment data and using the results to inform reading instruction?

5. How can I promote continuous professional development in reading instruction for teachers and administrators?

6. How would I structure a school-based Reading Leadership Team to further address these questions?

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Setting Priorities for Reading Instruction (Resource 7.6)

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Read each statement about scientifically based reading instruction and determine its priority by asking:

- What is its importance in teaching students to read at or above grade level? Rate from 1 to 5, with 5 as very high priority and 1 as very low priority.
- To what extent is it being implemented by teachers? Rate from 1 to 5, with 5 as clearly present and 1 as never present.

Importance when Teaching (Circle one)	Priorities for Reading Instruction	Extent of Implementation (Circle one)
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers focus instruction on the five essential components.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide differentiated instruction to address individual students' strengths and weaknesses.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Instruction is based on a comprehensive scope and sequence.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers plan and implement coordinated instructional activities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers use appropriate levels of student materials to match abilities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide ample practice opportunities.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers monitor progress frequently.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers maximize student learning.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers pace lessons appropriately.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers minimize disruption and protect reading instructional time.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers emphasize small-group instruction.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Teachers provide effective interventions for struggling readers.	5 4 3 2 1
5 4 3 2 1	Supplemental materials align with core reading instructional programs and materials.	5 4 3 2 1

1. What conclusions can you draw from your ratings?

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2. What areas need to be included in a reading action plan? Order by priority.

3. Select your three priority areas and suggest ways to reduce the gap between importance and implementation.

Priority 1:

Priority 2:

Priority 3:

Adapted from *Leadership Team Notebook*, Alabama Reading Initiative, and Alabama Literacy Change Initiative, 2003.

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Reading Self-Assessment Survey (Resource 7.7)

Name: _____ Grade Level: _____ Date: _____

Administrators and other instructional leaders need ongoing professional development to develop and enhance their knowledge, skills, and expertise in effective reading instruction and SBRR. Answer the following questions to assess your professional development needs.

What two areas related to reading instruction and SBRR have you learned more about recently?

What two areas related to reading instruction and SBRR do you want to learn more about?

List specific professional development activities that would help foster your continued growth and understanding of effective reading instruction and SBRR.

Review your results with others on your team to coordinate an action plan for meeting professional development needs.

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