



**2023**  
**ANNUAL MEETING  
& EXPOSITION**  
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# FROM COACHING TO CONFIDENCE: BUILDING CAPACITY WITHIN A SCHOOL



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# Goals

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- To understand the strengths and needs of mathematics teachers
- To develop appropriate professional development experiences to facilitate teacher growth
- To understand the role of a numeracy coach in teacher development
- To create a plan for teachers at the school (or in the district) of the participants

# Presentation Background

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- Basis in practice
- Basis in research



# Foundations

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- Coaching in Sports
  - Football Analogy



- Basketball Analogy



# Foundations

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- The number one priority for instructional coaches is to build positive relationships with *all* members of the school community.



# Foundations

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- When working with teachers, instructional coaches should ask questions about all aspects of teaching and learning. There should be a much higher ratio of questions than answers from the coach. This is a partnership, working together to improve student learning.



# Foundations

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- The focus of all conversations should be on student learning.



# Strategies for Working with All Teachers

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“The synthesis of prior research indicated that potentially productive activities for supporting teachers’ learning:

- Are sustained over time
- Are close to daily practice
- Focus on high-leverage aspects of instruction
- Foreground students’ thinking
- Engage teachers in both investigating and enacting ambitious and equitable forms of practice.”

From Kane, B. D., Cobb, P., and Gibbons, L. (2018). Understanding content-specific instructional coaching: On-the-ground support for teacher development. In P. Cobb et al., *Systems for Instructional Improvement: Creating Coherence from the Classroom to the District Office* (pp. 113-133). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



# Strategies for Working with All Teachers

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## Productive Individual Coaching Activities

- Modeling instructional practice
- Co-teaching
- Coaching Cycles

From Kane, B. D., Cobb, P., and Gibbons, L. (2018). Understanding content-specific instructional coaching: On-the-ground support for teacher development. In P. Cobb et al., *Systems for Instructional Improvement: Creating Coherence from the Classroom to the District Office* (pp. 113-133). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

# Strategies for Working with All Teachers

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## Productive Group Coaching Activities

- Doing mathematics with teachers
- Analyzing student work
- Analyzing classroom video
- Engaging in lesson study

From Kane, B. D., Cobb, P., and Gibbons, L. (2018). Understanding content-specific instructional coaching: On-the-ground support for teacher development. In P. Cobb et al., *Systems for Instructional Improvement: Creating Coherence from the Classroom to the District Office* (pp. 113-133). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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Receptivity to Change	Description
Resistant to Change	May not see the need to change; may not <i>want</i> to change
Realize the Need for Change	Know that there are elements of instruction that need to change, but may not know <i>how</i> to make the changes
Receptive to Change	“Two heads are better than one” mentality; want to work with others to plan, implement, and reflect on practice; desire constructive feedback and work to improve teaching practice
Reflective on Practice	Consider strengths and weaknesses of teaching and make revisions to teaching practice based on knowledge of students and content

# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are resistant to change

- Teachers who are resistant to change may not see the need to change or may simply not *want* to change.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are resistant to change

Why are teachers resistant to change?

1. They are overwhelmed.
2. They have had a previous unhelpful experience.
3. There is a lack of clarity about the coaching process.
4. They are content with the status quo.
5. They are afraid.

# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are resistant to change

- Strategies for working with these teachers:
  - Observing other teachers and reflecting about these visits
  - Including teachers in PLCs and PD experiences
  - Working with teammates when possible



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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Teachers who are resistant to change

What is the value of working with teammates?

Teachers who are resistant to change may see positive transitions in the instructional practices of co-workers and become more amenable to modifying their instructional practices.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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For more information on working with teachers who are resistant to change, see this article:

Toll, C. (2019). But I don't need a coach! *Educational Leadership*, 77(3), 74-77.



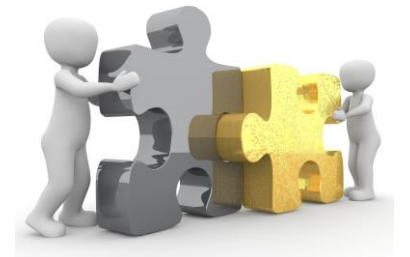


# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who realize the need for change

- Teachers know that there are elements of their instruction that need to change, and they are open to change. In some instances, the teachers may not know *how* to make the changes.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who realize there is a need for change

- Strategies for working with these teachers:
  - Planning together
  - Implementing lessons modeled by a coach or another teacher
  - Co-teaching with a coach or another teacher
  - Observing and reflecting with other teachers who exemplify the elements to be changed
  - Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or Professional Development (PD) targeted at the elements to be changed



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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Teachers who realize there is a need for change

What is the value of planning together, co-teaching, modeling lessons in a teacher's classroom, or having teachers observe others?

By working *with* teachers, coaches and teachers can build a collaborative relationship or partnership with open lines of communication.



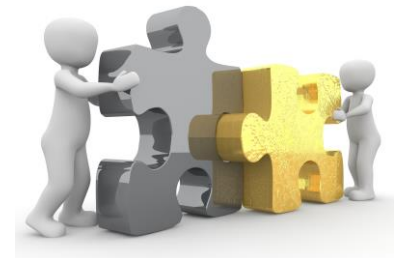
# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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For more information on working with teachers who realize there is a need to change, see these books:

Aguilar, E. (2013). *The Art of Coaching*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Knight, J. (2022). *The Definitive Guide to Instructional Coaching: Seven Factors for Success*. Arlington, VA: ASCD.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are receptive to change

- Teachers want to work with others to plan, implement, and reflect on practice. There is a “two heads are better than one” mentality. They want others to observe them; they *desire* constructive feedback and use this feedback to improve their practice.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are receptive to change

- Strategies for working with these teachers:
  - Planning together
  - Engaging in coaching cycles
  - Using student surveys for feedback

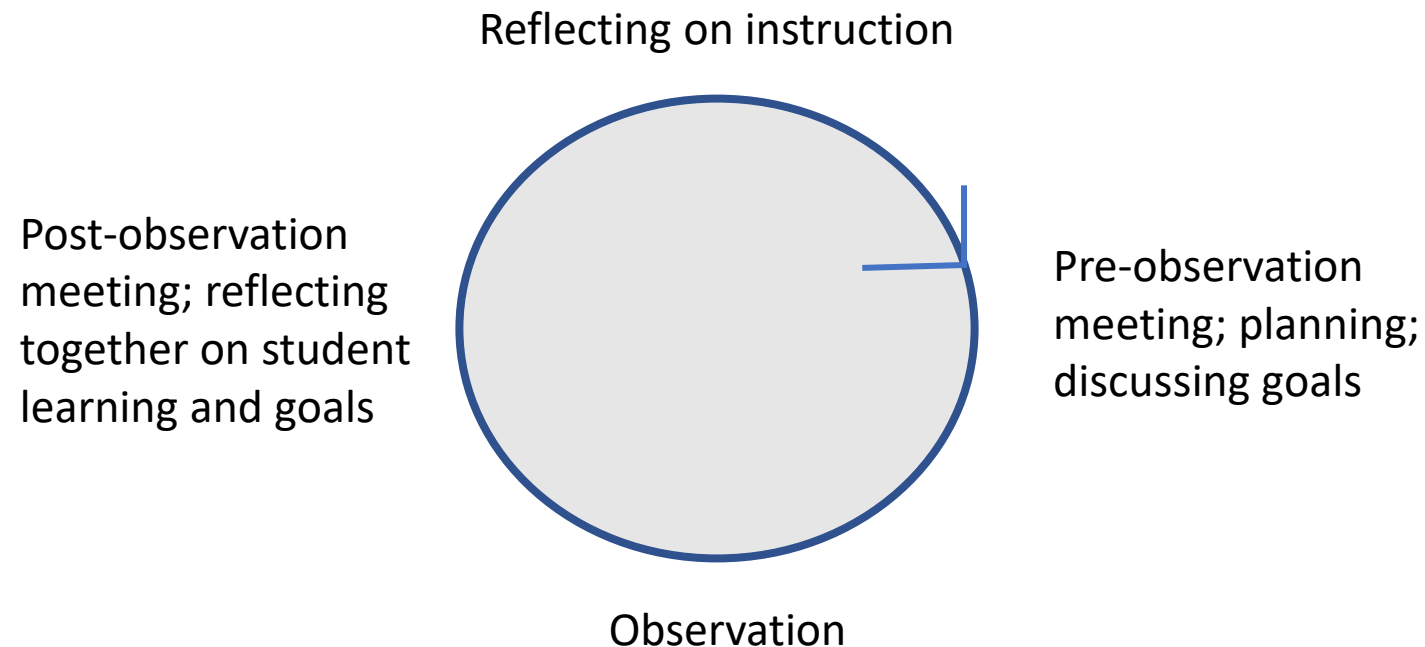


# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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Teachers who are receptive to change

What is a coaching cycle?



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are reflective on practice

Teachers who are reflective on their practice consider strengths and weaknesses of their own teaching and make revisions to their practice based on their knowledge of their students, the students' understandings, and the content.



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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## Teachers who are reflective on practice

- Strategies for working with these teachers:
  - Encouraging teachers to take on leadership roles
  - Encouraging teachers to open their classrooms to other teachers to observe
  - Encouraging teachers to mentor other teachers



# Looking at Teacher Stances on Change

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Teachers who are reflective on practice

What is the value of opening one's classroom to other teachers?

Both teachers can reflect on practice and learn from each other about strengths and areas for growth.



# Returning to the Foundations

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- The number one priority for instructional coaches is to build positive relationships with *all* members of the school community.
- When working with teachers, instructional coaches should ask questions about all aspects of teaching and learning. There should be a much higher ratio of questions than answers from the coach. This is a partnership, working together to improve student learning.
- The focus of all conversations should be on student learning.

# Developing a Plan

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- How can we leverage instructional coaches to differentiate the learning of *all* teachers in our schools while also improving student learning opportunities?
- How can administrators assess the appropriateness of work with teachers who have different stances on change through the lens of student learning?

# THANK YOU!

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A special thank you goes to Nicholas Kochmanski for comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this presentation.

# Questions and Comments

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- What questions and/or comments do you have about coaching teachers?



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