



Mayerson Academy Coaching Services

Objective

The primary and overarching objective of the coaching strategy is to improve student achievement significantly as measured by state tests, district assessments, and school and classroom formative assessments, by improving the knowledge and skills of teachers and principals and the capacity of leadership teams.

Plan

The Academy's coaching model draws on the well-established change and improvement criteria of relationships, rigor, and relevance. As with any new initiative or strategy, relationship building precedes the work in the other two areas.

Building Relationships: The first work of the coaching team is to establish trust and rapport with the school's staff. This is accomplished through collegial coaching conversations and the assurance of confidentiality. The coaches will review the school's achievement data, attendance, and classroom walkthrough or observation information if available. They will meet with the school's leadership team or school improvement team to create shared expectations and norms for the work. They will meet teachers at the opening staff meeting and will attend grade-level, grade-band, or subject area meetings.

Rigor: The two instructional coaches on the team are experts in the areas of mathematics and literacy. They will work with teachers based on a variety of factors: principal of the school may direct them to specific teachers; they may respond to teachers who request assistance; they may determine teachers with whom they should work based on classroom data and then develop a rapport with those teachers; and some teachers may self-select assistance or time with the coach. They will work with individual teachers in a variety of modes: in planning and implementing lessons; in perfecting specific instructional strategies; in developing or finding materials and other curriculum resources; in reflecting on practice; in observing classes and providing written and oral feedback; and in demonstrating lessons.

At the school level, instructional coaches provide assistance at various stages of instructional implementation: they plan and implement professional development in collaboration with the principal and teachers; they analyze data and student work with the staff; and they assist teachers in collaboratively planning lessons and critiquing each other. The coaches will use implementation guides or rubrics to assess the school or teacher's progress in specific district initiatives. The guides will be available to teachers and principals to use in self-assessment.

The principal coach, also known as a change coach, mentors and assists principals and other district and school administrators in the following areas: the recruitment and selection of staff; the development of school schedules; the organization of time so that regular classroom observations can be made; observations and post-observation conferences; the strengthening of the school's capacity for shared or collaborative leadership; and focusing the school's resources on instructional improvement.

Relevance: The entire coaching team will meet periodically with the school’s staff, the leadership team, school improvement team or governance body, and the principal. Coaches keep logs of their daily activities by teacher or group of teachers. These logs are analyzed bi-weekly as part of a debriefing to determine how the coaching team might most effectively use its time. The unique challenges and strengths of each school dictate the details of the planned work and pays particular attention to areas of promise on which to build improvement strategies.

Logistics of the Process

The core model for implementation is to have coaches working in the schools four days per week, serving 4-6 schools. They will work in coaching teams some of the time but most of the time they will be in the schools as individuals. The fifth day of each week is devoted to the professional development of the coaches. This time is comprised of team problem solving and planning and skill and knowledge building activities. The Academy staff provides this professional development, either at the Mayerson Academy, at a location in the district or using technological capabilities. An Academy staff member is assigned to support a team of coaches and has the responsibility to plan, in collaboration with the coaching team and school principal, the work for this day.

Advantages to External Coaches

- Principals or district staff cannot divert the coaches’ time to other school needs.
- Coaches have no personal or professional history with the persons they will be coaching.
- Coaches are not staff, and therefore the district is not assuming liability for their ongoing employment.
- Districts do not have to recruit, train, supervise, evaluate, and house the coaches.
- External coaches are usually more cost effective. The cost of a coach includes mileage, equipment, materials, and office space.
- The Academy is responsible for the professional development of the coaches, ensuring a high level of skill, knowledge, and expertise.

Evaluation

The Academy will use a third-party evaluator to determine the effect of the coaching initiative. Two surveys of school staff will be administered and analyzed—at the mid-point and end of year. Coaching logs of time spent on specific activities with specific teachers, teams of teachers, administrators, and/or leadership teams will be maintained and analyzed weekly. Conferences will be held with school and district administration to ensure ongoing satisfaction with the direction of the initiative. Modifications will be made as needed. Impact on student achievement will be determined and will drive the ongoing work. A final evaluation report will be provided within two months after receiving students’ standardized assessment scores or other achievement measures as agreed upon by the district and the Academy.

Professional Development

Professional development will be provided to the coaches on a weekly basis by the Mayerson Academy. The Academy has a two-year history of working with coaches and has refined its support and development strategies. Some of the top experts in the field of school improvement strategies and coaching have provided assistance with the design and delivery of the professional development program in which coaches participate.

Cost of Coaching Teams

Two-person coaching team @ \$80,000 per person	\$160,000
Principal on team @ \$90,000	90,000
*Personnel.....	\$160,000 -\$250,000
**Professional Development	\$8,000
Evaluation	\$5000
Total Cost	\$173,000-\$263,000
Cost per school for 4 schools.....	\$43,250--\$65,750
Cost per school for 6 schools.....	\$29,000--\$44,000

*Other configurations are possible, such as a Mayerson coach coupled with one or two local coaches. High School teams have four coaches, one in each core content area at an additional \$80,000 per coach.

**Cost of professional development does not increase if additional teams of coaches are added.

Addendum

An added bonus to staff in schools using The Academy's coaches is that they may attend Mayerson Academy courses at a 25% reduced rate. In addition, districts using The Academy's coaches will receive a 20% reduction in rates for room or facility rental (see Attachment D).