



# March 2026 Curriculum Update

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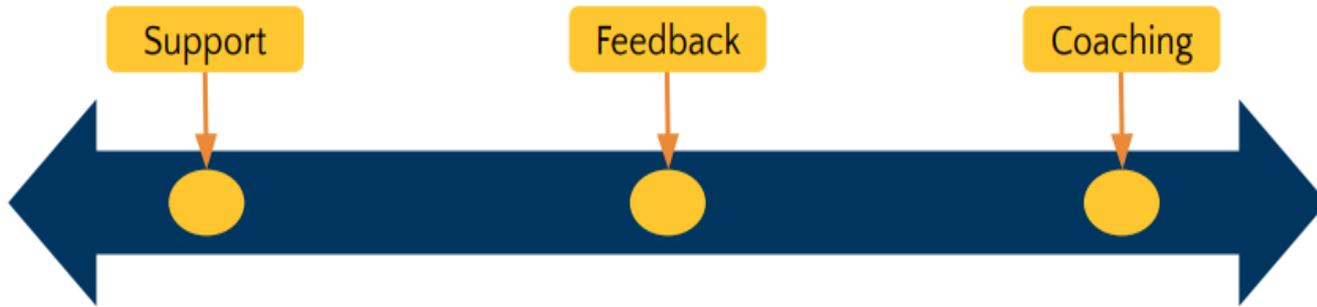
# INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING



“Simply put, the more questions you ask, the more answers you’ll receive and the more solutions you’ll uncover. But it’s important to be asking the questions that nobody else is asking. By simply asking a different question, you can open up the possibility of having dozens of different answers and ways to solve a problem.”

Forbes, *The Power of Asking the Right Questions*



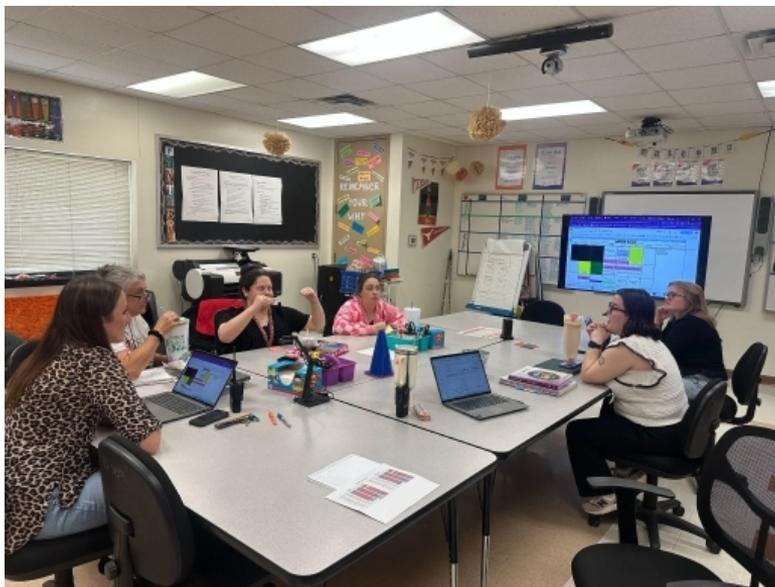


**Support:** Providing **resources** (training suggestions for HQIM implementation, books, articles, videos, planning guides etc.) that can have a positive on the student learning experience

**Feedback:** Observing instruction and giving **bite-sized suggestions** for improvement (via email, sticky note, quick verbal aside, etc.) to have a positive impact on the student learning experience

**Coaching:** Engaging in cycles of observations & **dialogic conversations** in which teachers set measurable goals and receive consistent feedback and support to accomplish them; results in both technical and adaptive changes





Intelligence plus character—that  
is the goal of true education.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Every student can  
learn, just not on the  
same day or in the  
same way.

George Evans

@weareteachers



# INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING:

## WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

### What Instructional Coaching IS

- Job-embedded professional learning
- Focused on one academic area or a set of pedagogical components
- Individualized
- A continuous improvement cycle to provide ongoing support
- A non-evaluative, collaborative partnership
- Active involvement in classrooms

A coach uses intangible consultation skills, such as gaining teacher buy-in, fostering a willingness to be vulnerable, and establishing trust.

### What Instructional Coaching IS NOT

- A summer Professional Development workshop
- Covering reading, math, writing, and behavior management all at the same time
- One size fits all
- One and done
- Evaluative and reported to your principal or district
- Administrative tasks such as substitute teaching, teaching intervention groups, crisis intervention, or secretarial work

National Center on Improving Literacy. (n.d.). *What instructional coaching is and is not.*

<https://improvingliteracy.org/resource/what-instructional-coaching-is-and-is-not/>

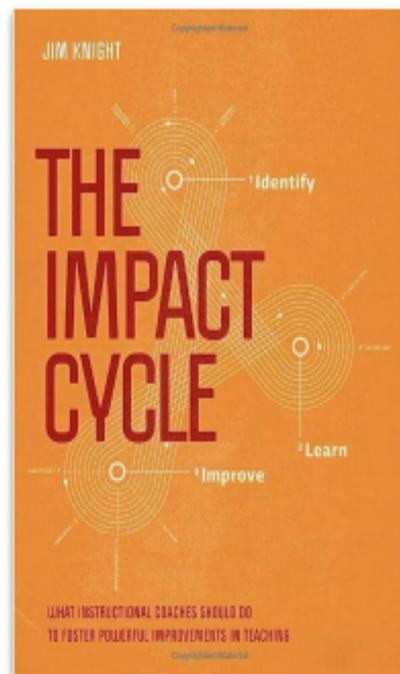
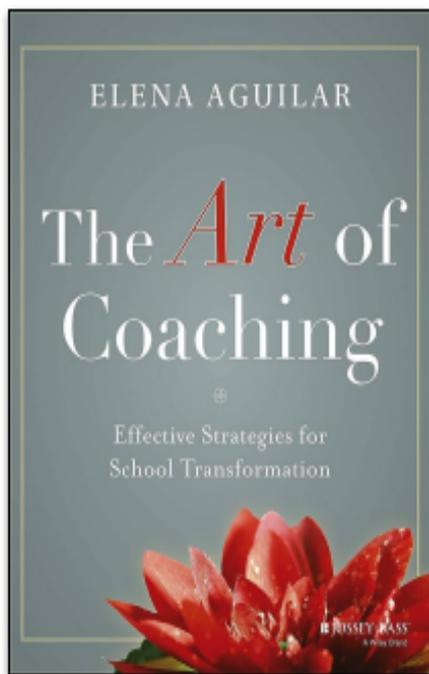
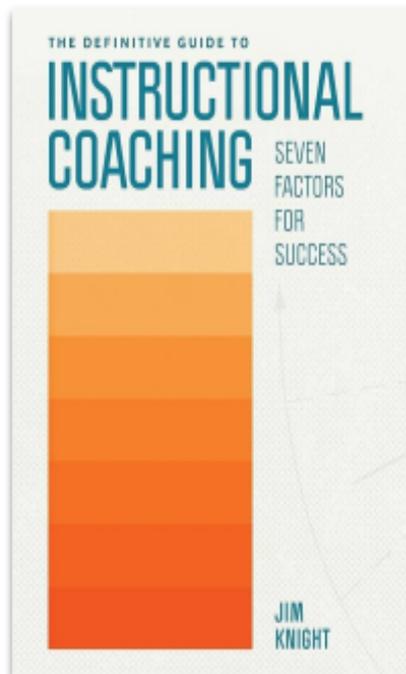




Education  
is your  
best tool



Instructional coaching can be described as the non-evaluative cycle of classroom observations and debrief conversations intended to improve classroom instruction and student outcomes.

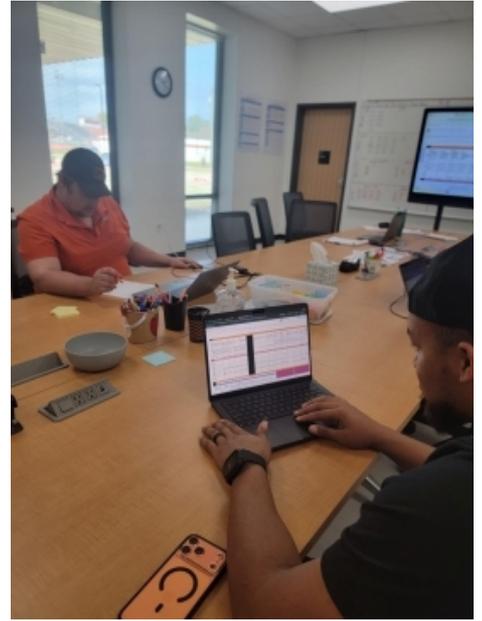
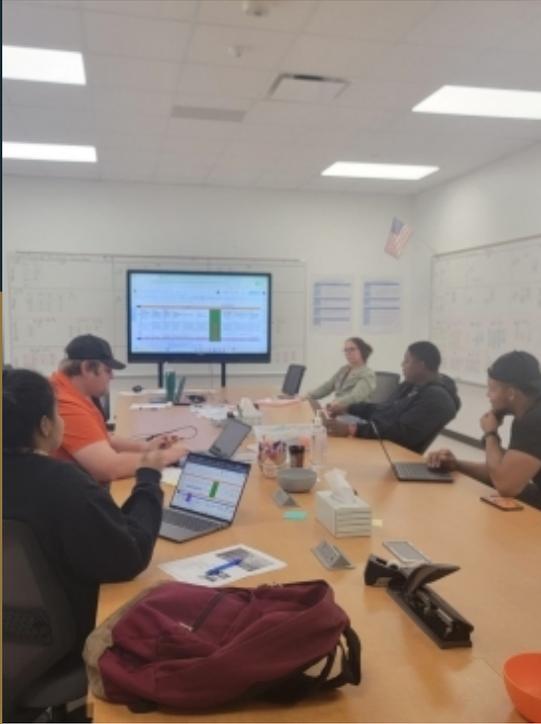


Instructional coaching improves both instructional practice and student achievement—more so than other professional development and school-based interventions. In fact, the quality of teachers’ instruction improves by as much as—or even more than—the difference in effectiveness between a new teacher and one with five to 10 years of experience, the research shows.

Will, M. (2018, July 31). *Instructional coaching works, says a new analysis. But there’s a catch.* Education Week. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/instructional-coaching-works-says-a-new-analysis-but-theres-a-catch/2018/07>

- Instructional coaching is one of the **most evidence-based professional learning strategies available**.
- Research consistently shows **large improvements in teaching quality and meaningful gains in student achievement**.
- Coaching is most effective when it is **job-embedded, ongoing, and focused on specific instructional practices**.
- Compared to many traditional initiatives, coaching produces **stronger and more durable changes in classroom practice**.





# Job-embedded support outperforms one-time PD

Research on professional learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) shows that effective PD must be:

- sustained
- job-embedded
- collaborative
- focused on practice

Instructional coaching is one of the **few structures that meets all four criteria simultaneously**.

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyer, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/122.311>





## Coaching is one of the highest impact ways to improve teaching

The gold-standard meta-analysis by Matthew Kraft, David Blazar, and Dylan Hogan (2018) found:

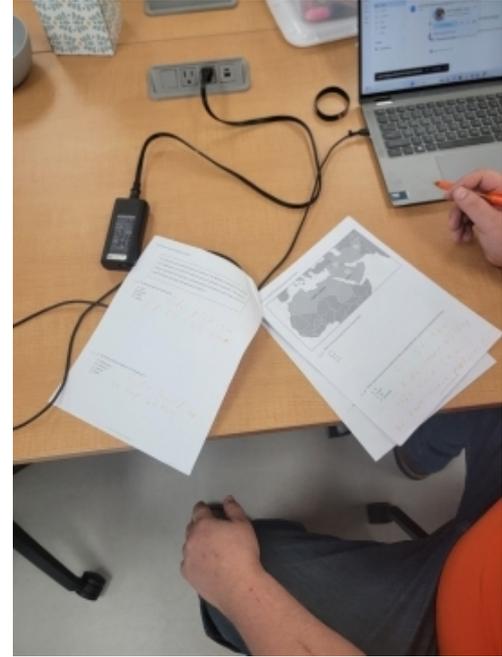
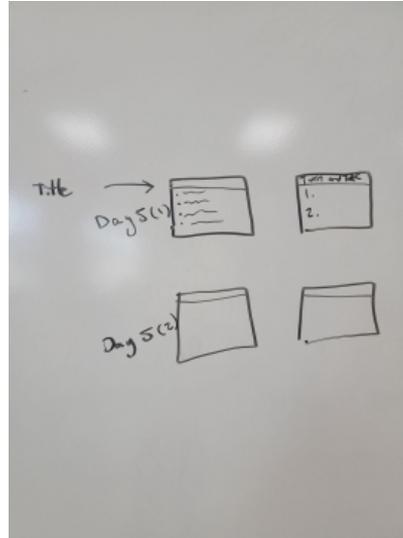
- **Teacher practice improvement:** ES = **0.49** (large)
- **Student achievement impact:** ES = **0.18**

In education research, 0.49 is considered **substantial**.

An effect size of 0.49 means the average teacher receiving coaching performs better than about 69% of teachers who did not receive coaching (Coe, 2002).

Kraft, M. A., Blazar, D., & Hogan, D. (2018). *The effect of teacher coaching on instruction and achievement: A meta-analysis of the causal evidence*. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(4), 547–588. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318759268>





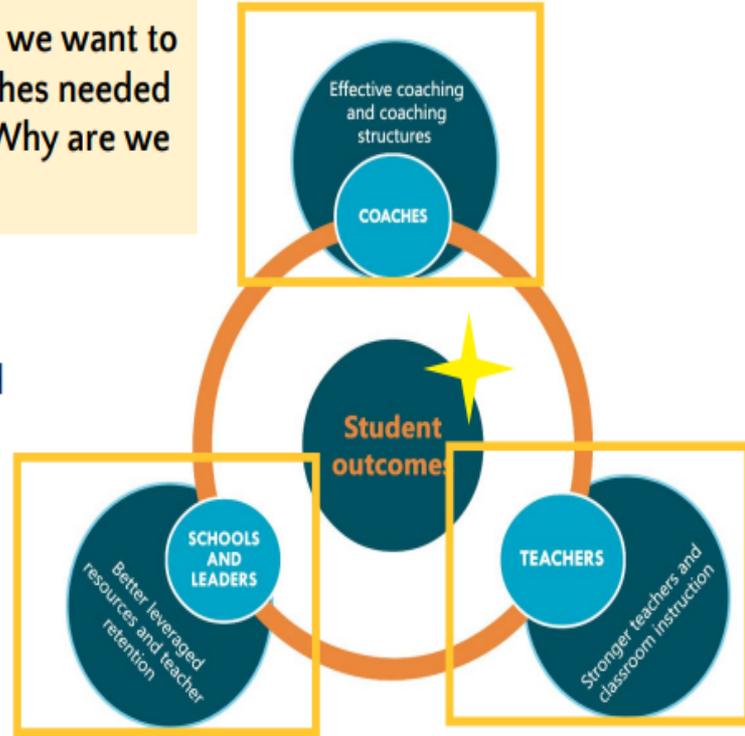
A theory of action articulates the desired outcome we want to be true and the activities, resources, and approaches needed to achieve it. It helps answer: What is the work? Why are we doing it? How will we do it?

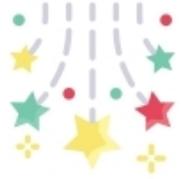
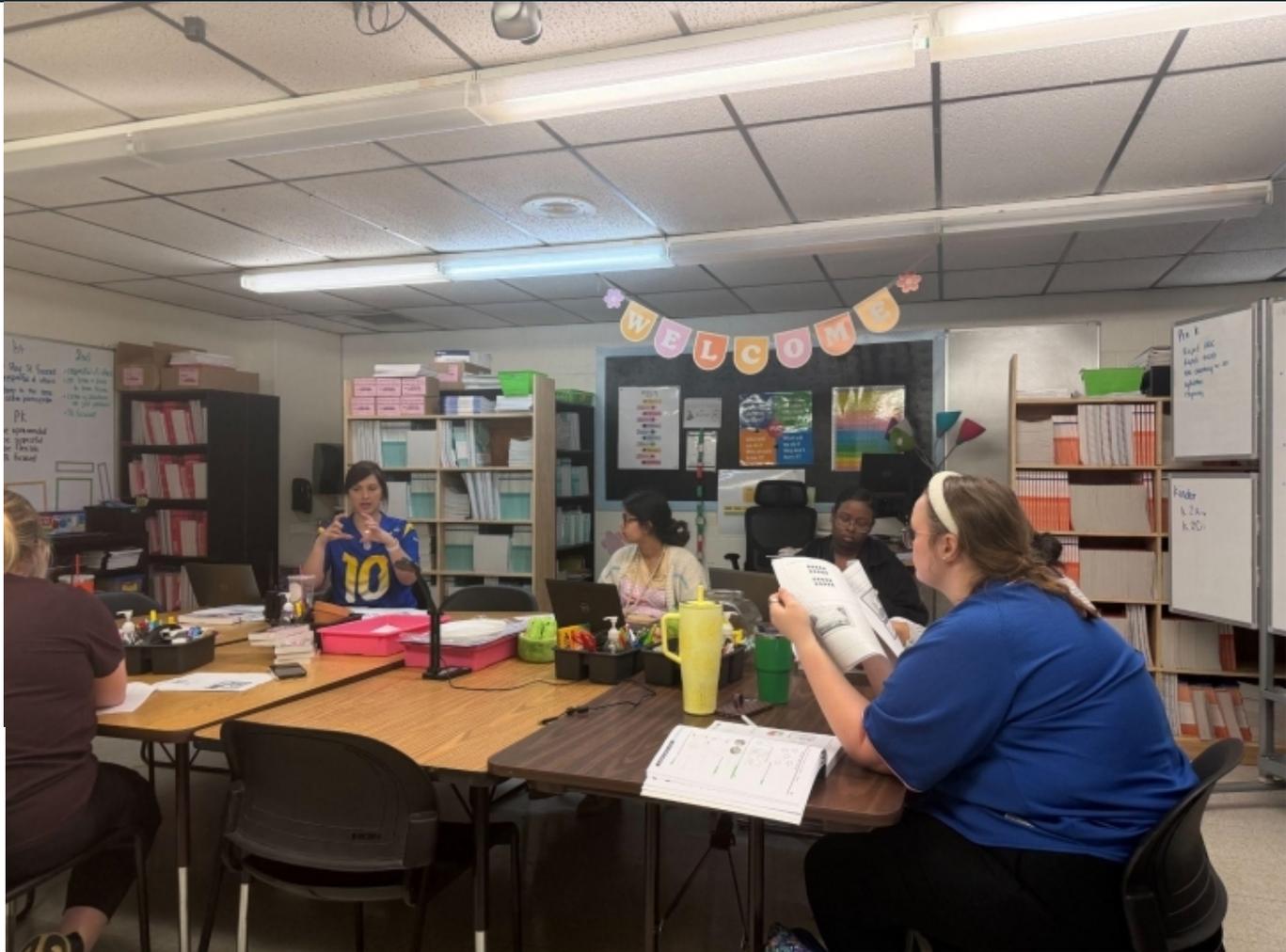
If coaches and coaching structures are effective...

...**then** teachers will deepen their knowledge of and ability to deliver stronger classroom instruction

...**then** schools and building leaders will be better equipped to develop and retain their talent

...**then** students will have stronger academic performance and experience a learning environment that maintains high expectations.





# High-quality materials alone are not enough

Research from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and multiple implementation studies shows:

Teachers rarely implement new curriculum with fidelity without sustained support.

Common findings:

- Teachers adapt materials heavily without guidance
- Rigor often decreases during first years of adoption
- Variability across classrooms widens

Eliopoulos, T. (2025). *Why curriculum alone is not enough*. Fordham Institute.  
<https://fordhaminstitute.org/national/commentary/why-curriculum-alone-not-enough>

IRIS Center, Vanderbilt Peabody College. (n.d.). *Provide ongoing supports*.  
<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/fid/cresource/q2/p07/>

Texas Association of School Boards. (n.d.). *Implementation fidelity tips*. <https://www.tasb.org/news-insights/tips-for-implementing-curriculum-with-fidelity>

Carnegie Corporation of New York (2020) notes, “Curriculum alone is not enough to improve learning — educators must also develop the professional capacity to use it well through aligned professional learning and support structures” (p. 14)



Research shows that instructional coaches provide ongoing, job-embedded support that helps improve teacher instruction and student outcomes more effectively than traditional professional development alone (Texas Association of School Boards, 2020; Brookings Institution, 2017; New Teacher Center, n.d.).

**Texas Association of School Boards. (2020).** *The impact of instructional coaches.* <https://www.tasb.org/news-insights/the-impact-of-instructional-coaches>

**Dai, H. (2017).** *Instructional coaching holds promise as a method to improve teachers' impact.* Brookings Institution. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/instructional-coaching-holds-promise-as-a-method-to-improve-teachers-impact/>

**TCEA. (2021).** *Five benefits of instructional coaching.* TCEA TechNotes Blog. <https://blog.tcea.org/five-benefits-instructional-coaching/>

**New Teacher Center. (n.d.).** *Instructional coaching.* <https://newteachercenter.org/what-we-offer/coaching/>

**National Center on Improving Literacy. (2025).** *Instructional coaching: Understanding the role with ready-to-resources.* <https://improvingliteracy.org/resource/instructional-coaching-guide-and-free-resources/>



Carnegie Corporation of New York. (2020). *The role of curriculum in teaching and learning*. <https://www.carnegie.org>

